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THE TEACHING OF ZARATHUSHTRA

Eight lectures and addresses delivered to Parsis in Bombay.

BY

JAMES HOPE MOULTON,

M.A., D. D., D. LIT., D. C. L., D. THEOL.

Professor in Manchester University.

SECOND EDITION.

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AT THE JAMSETJEE NESSERWANJEE PETIT PARSI ORPHANAGE
CAPTAIN PRINTING WORKS, No. 141, LAL BAUG, PAREL, AND
PUBLISHED BY PESTONJI ARDESHIR WADIA, M.A.,
HORMAZD VILLA MALBAR HILL.

1917.

PREFACE.

It is with feelings of peculiar thankfulness that I offer to the Parsi community in India and in England this little series of addresses upon their ancient faith. When I published my Hibbert Lectures, three years ago, a visit to India was as completely below my mental horizon as the vaster events which have made this epoch stand out in history, or the public and private sorrows that have transfigured the world for us. And now, since November 1915, I have made personal acquaintance with Parsi communities in Karachi, Bombay, Haidarabad, Ootacamund, Poona, Ahmadabad and Rajkot, and have everywhere experienced the greatest cordiality. I feel, therefore, that I am speaking to friends, and not only to a very interesting people very far away, known to me only from books.

The occasion of the first six of these addresses is set forth in the text of the first, and I need not repeat any explanation. The last two differ widely, being academic lectures on Parsi archæology, instead of addresses on practical religion. I have had such constantly large and attentive Parsi audiences in my two courses of lectures in the Convocation Hall, that I am glad to preserve a part of the course on "Aryan Antiquities,' which is in keeping with the general purpose of this little book. A considerable part of the second course, given as Wilson Philological Lecturer, will I hope make its appearance in "The Treasure of the Magi," a larger work for the preparation of which I was invited to India by the Young Men's Christian Association.

The text of these addresses will sufficiently express the thoughts and hopes with which I send them forth, warmly thanking my friends Mr. H. J. Bhabha and Mr. P. A. Wadia for the unfailing kindness which has made the publication possible, and Dr. Daji for undertaking

the companion volume in a language unhappily unknown to me. As I pen these words, the shadow of heavy bereavement has returned upon me, who am but one among the myriads sorely striken by the ruthlessness of War. But though "the grass withereth and the flower falleth, the word of our God abideth for ever." And it is some part of that "word of good tidings" that is preached in this little book. May the Wise Lord prosper it!

Y. M. C. A. Girgaon, Bombay. J. H. M.
August 25th, 1916.

THE ZOROASTRAIN INHERITANCE.

An address delivered to Parsis at the Bengali School Hall; Friday, February 11th, 1916.

I find it hard to express the feelings with which I come to address this large and representative meeting of Parsis. My interest in your community began thirty years ago, when as an undergraduate I began the study of the Avesta under my venerated *guru*, Professor Cowell, Professor of Sanskrit in Cambridge University. That great Orientalist, and great and good man, deserved well of Iranian as well as of Indian studies. It was he who taught his friend Edward Fitz Gerald Persian, and put in his hands that Persian poem of Omar Khaiyyàm, which in his interpretation was to pass from the masterpieces of Asia to take its place among the masterpieces of British literature.

And now I have at last the unlooked for privilege of meeting face to face a large company of those about whom I have thought much through many years. I must begin my address with a rather careful description of my personal position in venturing to address Parsis about their own religion. You have been told that I am to give a series of five addresses on the Teaching of Zarathushtra in the Excelsior Theatre, beginning tomorrow afternoon. I do this in response to a very kind invitation from three Parsi gentlemen who wish to remain anonymous. I am glad that I do not know their names, because it makes it obvious that I am not in the hands of any one party or school of thought among you. The lectures are not a cunning device of some one school to use a visitor from the West for their own purposes. My unknown friends are perfectly aware that they cannot expect an outsider like myself to agree with them all round, or with any section in the Parsi community. They only know that I have studied the ancient sacred books of your faith with deep and sympathetic interest for many years, and proved my warm admiration by what I have written. And so when the utterly unex-

pected opportunity has come by which I can crown the study of books by the study of men and women of the modern community, they have thought it likely that Parsis may be interested to hear what such a visitor from the West sees to admire and to inculcate in your ancient faith. I am not likely to please at once all parties among you. You are divided deeply in opinion, as I believe every really alive and thinking community must be. So long as bitterness and unbrotherly strife are kept at bay, and earnest men can agree to differ with tolerance and earnestness equally mixed, such differences matter very little and are even healthy. Naturally your visitor could not possibly find an exclusive home for himself in any one of your parties. A Radical in British politics, a keen Protestant in my own religion, I might be expected to sympathise strongly with any section that claims the title of Reformers. A strong believer in the beauty and truth of the Gathas, I may well sympathise with an orthodoxy that dreads any weakening of Zarathushtra's hold upon his people. And even the Theosophist I can appreciate when I see deep and real eagerness for spiritual truth, for realities behind figures. (I say "even" only because I am from the West, and Theosophy as usually understood is a plant which—barring a few freaks—is as incapable of growth in a Western mind as the banyan of growth in British soil.) I feel sure therefore that you will pardon the very probable appearance of views with which now some and now others will fail to agree. Independent I must be, but I hope no one will at any point fail to allow for my complete and hearty sympathy.

I have something else that I must say in introduction to this address, arranged long ago by my friend Dr. Modi, and to the specific lectures on Zoroastrian doctrine to which the accident of time makes this address a preface. I am, as you know, in the service of the Young Men's Christian Association for this year of absence from my own college and university. My three unknown friends who are arranging the lecture course have earned my warm gratitude by making a gift in acknowledgement to the war fund of the Young Men's Christian Association. I may take this as a text for the personal statement I must make

before I go further. You know, I believe, that the Y. M. C. A. Secretaries who are with our brave Indian troops at the Front go there on the express promise not to say anything about Christianity unless asked to do so. Their service is given from sheer love of men who are offering their lives for the Empire; and if they expect any advantage to their religion, it will only be that men who have received much kindness from Christians are not likely to think hardly of the religion that inspired them to do that service.

Now in a sense of course that pledge is very much like mine when I exercise the privilege of addressing Parsis. Except for occasional illustrations, I am not going to refer to Christianity. You will ask perhaps how far that is consistent with honesty, and with the Christian's belief that his own religion is the crown and the flower of all. Have I forgotten that I am a Christian missionary? For you realise of course that a Christian as such must be a missionary. A nominal Christian who does not do something to make India Christian is no Christian at all. We know we have got in Christ a possession which transforms life, and which we cannot and dare not keep to ourselves. We want others to have the offer of that which has so much blessed us; and that is the one and only reason why Christian missionaries come and labour in this land. No, I have not forgotten—as well might you forget Zarathushtra and your own inheritance of which I speak this afternoon. But I can praise the teaching of Zarathushtra, and try to expound it faithfully because I believe in it. I go the whole way with you here, and if I claim that I go a great deal further, that does not prevent my travelling very harmoniously with you as far as you are ready to go with me. Yours is the only non-Biblical religion in the world of which I can say this. When your own Mobeds nineteen hundred years ago came to lay their gold and frankincense and myrrh at the feet of the infant Saviour—Saoshyant, as I call him in our language—it was, I fervently believe, because the treasures of Zoroastrian belief were the most precious gift the world had to offer him who came not to destroy but to fulfil. If then I meet a nominal Zoroastrian who does not know his own

religion, or even a sincere Zoroastrian who according to the plain meaning of the Avesta has departed from his religious inheritance, it would be my sincere endeavour to make him a better Zoroastrian. For the better he understands your prophet's doctrine, the more faithfully he strives to order his life according to his ideals, the nearer he comes to Christ and to the God and Father of us all.

I am sure you will forgive my frankness. I cannot allow you to think that I have one thing on my lips and another in my mind. It is the glory of your religion, as of mine, that truth must always be supreme ; and you will respect me more if you know why after these few plain words I drop reference to my own religion, and confine myself to the loyal exposition of yours which is mine as well.

What then is your "Inheritance," and what does your Religion bid you do with it?

First and foremost you have the person and work of your Prophet Zarathushtra. I am hoping in one of my University lectures to go into some detail about him, and I shall therefore not undertake a special appreciation here. It is not necessary even to examine historical facts and theories here. But as Zarathushtra's antiquity is the first in order of the claims he makes upon our admiration, I must in a sentence say where I stand on that well-known problem. I shall not stop to refute the paradox of James Darmesteter, that supremely great Orientalist who within a year of his early death proposed the unlucky thesis that the Prophet was only a myth and the Gathas dateable in the first century A. D. No one who counts has accepted that view. Your own tradition gives the dates 660 B. C. to 583 as the limits of his life. I have found some of your scholars apparently inclined to go a trifle of five or six thousand years earlier. I am afraid such dating would throw all our scientific systems of chronology into confusion, and naturally there is no evidence whatever except an uncritical Greek statement which can be easily explained. But I have long been convinced that your Prophet's life must fall somewhere between 1000 and 1500 B. C. And such an antiquity means that he shares with Moses a first place in point of time

among the world's great innovators in religion. The loftiness and the purity of the religious ideas set forth by him—or possibly to some extent by his immediate disciples—in the Gathas become all the more wonderful when we remember that he was a pioneer with few if any predecessors on anything like his own level of spiritual achievement. He was moreover lonely in his own age. For years he was wandering and preaching, meeting with failure long before he attained success. The persecution he suffered for offering to other men new truths in religion is an impressive object-lesson for India to-day of the wickedness and wrong of using any other argument than reason and kindness in dealing with those who following conscience depart from the religion in which they were born. For depth of conviction, for the wonderful combination of profundity and practical sense, and for the purity of thought which "uttered nothing base," Zarathushtra towers like a beacon among the leaders of mankind in the early days of ancient civilisation. I admire also his manner of dealing with error. He knows how to kindle to a flame of hot denunciation where he is face to face with that which is morally wrong. But error for which men were not to blame he preferred to deal with in another way. He knew what our great Scottish divine Chalmers called "the expulsive power of a new affection." What is imperfect and erroneous is best driven out by the persuasive presentation of the perfect and the true. "We needs must love the highest when we see it," and the supreme work of a Prophet is to open men's eyes and let them see the fair figure of Truth. It may be that the form of Truth as Zarathushtra saw her was too dazzling for men's eyes to gaze upon; and when he was gone they turned from her to the lower ideals which he had been content to ignore. But his vision was there still, and when the Reformation came under the Sassanians most of its lineaments were recaptured and held for the present age.

Passing from what Zarathushtra was to what he taught, I note as the most precious novelty he brought men his uncompromising monotheism. Of that I shall be speaking fully tomorrow, and I will only put my judgment on this matter in a single sentence. I am accustomed to say, in expounding your religion to my people in the West, that

Zarathushtra taught absolutely nothing about God which a Christian could not endorse. We believe—nay, we know from our own experience, that the revelation of God in Jesus Christ teaches us what we could not learn in any other way, and what has power and blessedness beyond compare. But one who has been sittting at Zarathushtra's feet has nothing to unlearn ; and he finds, as I am constantly finding myself, new beauty latent in this earlier gospel brought to light in the beams of the later. You will feel at least that as a Christian I have in this assertion made the highest claim for Zarathushtra that my thought could possibly frame.

Another vitally important asset of yours in the Teaching of Zarathushtra is his doctrine of Evil. Here I do not mean his philosophy as to the origin of Evil. Authorities differ as to his meaning here, and even when I come to devote a special lecture to the subject I do not think I shall trouble very much about the answer to this problem. After all, the origin of Evil is ancient history—very much so ! It is more practically necessary for us to discuss how to stop it. The ending of Evil, in our own lives and in the lives of people around us, is a problem infinitely more urgent : the other will wait. The glory of Zarathushtra's attitude towards Evil is twofold—negative and positive. In the first place he and Moses stand alone among the religious teachers of their millennium in that they make no provision for placating Evil. Zarathushtra never allowed men to cringe before the devil with offerings and prayers, hoping to turn aside his malignity. What a tragical picture it is when we see poor peasants in this country bringing their hard-earned possessions to appease a fiend like Kali ! There has never been anything like that in Zoroastrianism. In a religion very near it, Mithraism, they tell us priests used to slaugther a wolf to Ahriman in a sunless place. Never was such a sacrifice offered in any Zoroastrian shrine. Your Prophet told you that you had nothing to do with Evil but to fight it with all your power. " Resist the devil and he will flee from you " is a maxim implied in your religion as well as expressed in mine.

And the fight against Evil is in Zarathushtra's conception a very practical one. It was not by spells and charms that the Devil was to be

driven off. Prayer to the Lord of Good is to be accompanied by stern and diligent effort. To fight Evil is no easy task—it lies within us, and not only around us ; and he who fights it must brace his will to the longest and severest battle he can ever go through. Zarathushtra did not say the last word on this tremendous subject, but he gave practical counsel of very great value. Do the right, speak the right, think the right, and let Right itself fight with Wrong.

And in that great fight Zarathushtra shows us plainly where victory at the last will be. You are not in a world where Evil is entrenched in the very constitution of things. The creatures of God are around you, and what He has made is good. No asceticism, no morbid depreciation of the Creator's work, enters into the robust optimism of Zarathushtra. The follower of your Prophet is not commanded to forswear the innocent enjoyment of life, as something that is inherently evil. He is to enjoy it, but with unfailing self-control. I would not on any account use hard words of an ascetic who denies himself enjoyment or endures voluntary pain in order to win as he thinks true spiritual good. But I am sure the other is the better and healthier way, and it is this which Zarathushtra left to you.

In conduct then you are bidden to cherish purity in word and thought and deed, to work honourably and industriously for daily bread, and to help your fellowbelievers who may be in trouble. It is a sound, sane rule of conduct, and it is good to think how deeply it has made its mark upon the history of your community. Practical sense and industrious enterprise have always characterised the Parsi. And, better still, the spirit of generous giving has made the Parsi name well recognised everywhere. I remember when four years ago I gave my Hibbert lectures in London on " Early Zoroastrianism, " and how happy a coincidence it seemed that they were delivered in a " Cowasji Jehangir Hall. " I came to Bombay, and have had the privilege of lecturing in your University. And lo ! the same honoured Parsi name adorns this Hall also. It is a good type of a public spirit that has always distinguished Parsis who have made great fortunes and have felt a call to use their

wealth for the benefit of the community as a whole. It is matched by the charity with which you see to it that poverty among yourselves shall be relieved by the gifts of the more favoured. All this comes directly out of your Founder's ideals in religion, and the practical as well as exalted conceptions he taught have their best witness in the results they have encouraged.

From this appreciation of the past and present record of achievement, may I go on to portray what appeals to me most in your work for the future ? I would sum it all up in urging upon you who are proud of Zoroastrianism to redouble your efforts to make religion mean more to yourselves and to your people. Communities which are blessed with a high and pure religion always tend to fall behind their own ideals, to keep up the externals and lose the spirit. In my own country every true Christian preacher centres all his effort on the hard task of turning nominal or external Christians into men and women worthier of the Christian name. I am assured that the case is the same with you. It is not enough to be an orthodox Zoroastrian, punctilious in observing ceremonies and proud of the inheritance of a great religion. Ceremonial observance may become purely mechanical ; orthodoxy and even zeal may go with a life to which religion means very little. For all of us alike, religion must be the first thing in life, if it is to be anything at all. As we put it for Christians, a mere religion for Sundays is worse than useless : God can never be pleased with a worship that produces no effect upon daily life. Even so we cannot call a man a good Zoroastrian merely because he is regular at the Fire-temple. The real test is whether his prayers help him to overflow with good thoughts, words and deeds, to live in the presence of God continually, and to be a centre of purity and mercy among men. If prayer is to achieve all this, it is clear that it will need a very real reform as a public institution for many Parsis. You set high value on your ancient liturgy. That is right, though I do not believe that any liturgy, Gathic or English, comes anywhere near expressing all the needs of human life, so that the best of liturgies needs supplementing by free prayer. But it is surely clear that the value of the liturgy must be reduced to very little when

the worshipper does not know the meaning. It is better, as our great Apostle Paul says, to speak five words with the understanding than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. I am very glad of the efforts that are made to spread the knowledge of your sacred language. In a community so justly proud of its high level of education, it ought at least to be possible to teach every child to know the meaning as well as the actual words of the prayers that are to be repeated. But beyond and above all this, the peril of formalism needs to be brought home to everyone. The needs of the world to-day are incalculably great, and we whose religions teach us to believe in prayer must make that resource mean incomparably more than it has ever meant.

For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hand of prayer,
Both for themselves and those who call them friend ?
For so the whole round world is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

May I close with one more appeal to you, as one who deeply loves India and longs to see every kind of good influence liberated for her uplift and blessing ? You have given India rich gifts already. Beyond all proportion you have enriched her with distinguished men. I think of Malabari whose "*Life*" is an inspiration to read. I think of "India's Grand Old Man," whom I made pilgrimage to see in his home at Varsova two or three days after I landed here. And there are many more. But it is just because your little community has done so much for your adopted country that I long to see it doing even more. In a country where so many millions are the victims of debased idolatry, and have no conception of God higher than what your religion and mine would call simply devil-worship, I long for the service warm-hearted Zoroastrians might render to lead their countrymen to higher ideals. I am not referring to the vexed question of proselytism. Whether you should admit outsiders to the privileges of your own community is a purely domestic question for yourselves, on which I should consider it almost an

impertinence to have an opinion, much less to express it. But I cannot believe there are any among you who want to have a monopoly of a pure doctrine of God, a lofty view of duty, and the promise of happiness as the eternal reward of well-doing. I feel that we may ask for your sympathy and even your help in putting such an emancipating gopsel before people whose only idea of God is one of terror. It must be possible to entertain this unselfish ambition without clashing against the principle which forbids your enlarging the Parsi community. I can assure you, from experience in other circles of religion, that such a passion for sharing the good things of your ancient falth with multitudes who are in spiritual darkness is the one certain way of bringing a new springtide of life into your own people and into your own individual souls. May the Wise Lord Himself give you wisdom and blessing!

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD.

You will not be surprised at my setting this subject first in my attempt to survey systematically the teaching of Zarathushtra. Every religion stands or falls by what it can teach about God. Its standard of conduct—and this is the ultimate end of religion—will always depend on its conception of God. A mean, an impure, an unworthy idea of God will lower the conception of human life. A pure and lofty doctrine about God will be a perpetual rebuke to unworthy conduct, and an incentive to all that will make us less unfit to stand before Him. I shall try to show what exalted truth there is in your Prophet's vision of God, and present the challenge that that high teaching throws out that we should live worthily of it.

May I remind you that in this and in future addresses I am confining myself strictly to the teaching of Zarathushtra himself as seen in the Gathas? This restriction enables me to expound only that with which I entirely and heartily agree. I am not sure that I should have seen all these truths in the Gathas without the microscope that my own religion gives me: a true Prophet always says more than he knows, and later times must bring out the fullness of his intuitions. But a microscope will not show anything that is not actually there, and I am honestly convinced that I am setting forth what really lies in the thought of the Gathas. I could not say the same of the later Avesta. I do not see how to escape the recognition of polytheism in the "Gatha of Seven Chapters" and in the Yashts. You who regard these as Scripture, not less than the Gathas themselves, will correct them by the Gathas and by the authoritative teaching of the Sassanian Reform; and I have no doubt you can satisfy yourselves that by treating the Yazatas as angels, strictly subordinated to Ormazd, you can read these later hymns in a sense consistent with monotheism. My point of view and yours meet sufficiently when I urge that in any

case for you the Gathas must of necessity stand first, and that you must read the rest of your Scriptures strictly in the light of what your Prophet clearly teaches.

The first point I would notice in Zarathushtra's teaching about God is that he is not in any way identified with the powers of Nature. He is not the Sun or the Sky or the thunder, like the gods whom the Aryans worshipped: He stands above all these His creatures. Ahura Mazdâh, the "Wise Lord," was apparently worshipped long before Zarathushtra came. He was the clan deity of the "Aryans," as the Behistun Inscription of Darius tells us, and the "Aryans" here represent, I believe, the small clan of nobles to which the Achaemenian Kings belonged: the representative of the conquering race which came in from Europe four thousand years ago and brought into Asia, and India, the language which forms a link between English and Gujarati. To that race and not to the non-Aryan priestly tribe of the Magi, Zarathushtra himself owed his descent, in my opinion. He started, therefore, with an inherited worship which sought God in a spiritual omniscience, and not in the great visible powers of Nature, however splendid. To this doctrine, entirely congenial to him, he added much more of the same character—a purely spiritual picture of the Supreme Creator who "clothes Himself with the massy heavens as a garment," to quote his own sublime words (*Yasna* XXX. 5). Zarathushtra could have accepted heartily the great hymn of praise which Milton puts into the mouths of the first parents of mankind:—

> These are thy glorious works, Parent of Good,
> Almighty! thine this universal frame
> Thus wondrous fair! Thyself how wondrous then,
> Unspeakable, who sitt'st above these heavens,
> To us invisible, or dimly seen
> In these thy lowest works—yet these declare
> Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.

Zarathushtra thought of Ahura Mazdah as the Creator of the whole universe as we see it. He never speaks of the Devil as creating anything. Darkness as well as light comes from God's hands—who that has gazed into these southern skies at night could ever think otherwise! And with this boundless creative power God unites an omniscience expressed in His chosen name. "Open and secret things" are alike clear to Him (*Yasna*, XXXI. 13), and He "sees for onward" (XXXIII. 13), the future as perfectly as the present. None of us can expect to do, or say, or even think what will escape God's "flashing eye." None of us may match our puny strength against His omnipotence, or dream that our revolt against Him will ever threaten anything but our own well-being.

No one who reads the Gathas can fail to see that Zarathushtra intended his doctrine of God to be expressed mainly through those abstract conceptions which later teachers called the Amesha Spenta "the Immortal Holy Ones." In the Gathas there is no collective name for them, and there is no clear restriction of their number. Later theology, which chose six of these conceptions and set them apart as Archangels, was in my belief inadequately representing Zarathushtra's thought. I believe he meant them to be *within* the Being of God, not separate from Him as exalted members of the heavenly court. They are higher than Gabriel or Michael, the New Testament archangels. We could never pray to "God and Michael," as Zarathushtra does to "Wise Lord and Good Thought and Righteousness." Moreover, Zarathushtra can substitute "Thy Thought" for "Good Thought." How can God's Thought be other than a part of Himself? I believe Zarathushtra caught the great truth which lies at the centre of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity—that we cannot properly understand the Unity of God without realising a diversity within His unity. The pure white light of the sun is made up of the colours of the rainbow. Polytheism divides Deity into discordant elements. The divine Moon may hide the divine Sun in eclipse. The Winds make war upon the Waters. The strife of Nature is reflected in the strife that rages within the unhappy family of Gods and Goddesses, all scheming against and fighting against one another. Deity is divided

against itself, and (as the history of Greek religion shows) is destined sooner or later to lose the worship and even the respect of mankind. On the other hand a monotheism that makes God into an undifferentiated Unity, like that of Islam, removes Him from the range of our understanding. He is so high above us that we seem to have no point of contact with Him. It is a clear and brighter doctrine that views God as a meeting-point of the great attributes of Godhead which harmoniously join in His Personality. Zarathushtra's doctrine is of course very different in this respect from the Christian Trinitarian teaching; but the very difference emphasises by its manifest independence the value of the great thought that formed the central inspiration of your Prophet's most important contribution to human knowledge of God.

Let us ask what we may learn, in the form of practical lessons, from the Divine attributes collected thus within the Person of Ahura Mazdah. First—though it is not easy to determine the primacy between the first two—first comes *Asha*, what is "Right." No one English word will fully express this great idea: we use Right, Truth, Righteousness and might sometimes use Order. Asha is the order of things as they ought to be, the world as it is in the Creator's ideal. We may apply this thought to our doctrine of the world as revealed to us by natural science. We have become accustomed, especially since Charles Darwin's day, to the conception of the world as evolved by the operation of fixed Laws of Nature. The position of Asha suggests accordingly that view of evolution which is universal among intelligent Western Christians to-day. Asha stands for the Reign of Law, but it is also a part of the very Being of God. We are not therefore to regard Natural Law as something outside of God. God is not like an earthly king in a constitutional monarchy, who begins his reign by swearing to observe laws laid down by past ages. His Laws are part of Himself: they are, so to speak, the "habits" of God—what we observe as the methods by which He has been pleased to work. It follows that we must always be prepared to find Him using unique methods for unique purposes, and not to tie down His action to what we may be able to understand.

Not less important is the thought of Asha for the practical side of life. It includes "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure," to use our Paul's great language about the assets of the soul. Your God—who in these regards is also ours—could never be associated with lying, with favouritism and injustice, or with sexual vice, like the gods of ancient Greece or of modern Hinduism. And the worshippers of Ahura Mazdah are called by their central creed to cultivate all these lofty virtues. "To speak the truth" was the proud summary of a Persian boy's education twenty-four centuries ago : and to day history and religion combine to make a Parsi child ashamed of anything less than truth in word and thought and deed. Perfect justice between man and man, the giving to all their rights, as fixed not by our partial judgment, but by the God who is Lord of us all—scavengers and kings alike, Asha shows to be the ideal of those who would follow Zarathushtra's Law. Nor less does Asha condemn "the corruption that is in the world through Lust," that most insidious and most disastrous of all temptations, yielding to which turns men into the very semblance of the brutes. Purity is ever on the Parsi's lips ; and never was there greater need that his testimony should be urgent and practical and sincere.

Before I leave the thought of Asha I would recall the very ancient association of it with the sacred symbol Fire. Multitudes who know nothing else about you know that you are "fire-worshippers," and I have denied the statement with all heartiness scores of times. I have declared that fire is with you the outward and visible symbol of the Divine. And what could be more suitable than that which can never be polluted, as earth or water or air, with the germs of foul disease or with anything else that is unclean—the great purifier of Nature's system, the indispensable necessity of human life ? No Christian who remembers his own Scriptures can cavil at such symbolism as this. It is only important to remember that all symbols tend, especially with uneducated people, to usurp what belongs only to the higher reality behind them. There may be some ignorant Parsis for whom the Fire really is a god and not a symbol. If there are, you who know better will count it a privilege to enlighten them.

So to *Vohu Manah*, "Good Thought." The deepest truth suggested by this is that Zarathushtra enthrones Thought as the spring of Words and Deeds. He caught the supreme spiritual law on which Jesus dwelt continually, that all reformation must begin within, that to purify

the heart is the only way of making a good man. "Good Thought" is no transcendental or philosophic virtue, the occupation of the ascetic or the devotee. It is the simple godliness of men and women living in the world and doing their duty. It is very suggestive that under Vohu Manah's protection the cattle were placed by an ancient association dimly visible in the Gathas themselves. "The merciful man is merciful also to his beast," and kindness to dumb animals is a much needed virtue in a land where there are many to forbid the last kind stroke that puts a tortured animal out of its misery, but fewer to denounce cruelty that makes its life an agony. "Good Thought" is also collective, a name for right-thinking people in the mass. More often it describes their future reward. That "Good Thought" should be a name for Paradise is deeply suggestive. It reminds us that there is no Heaven worthy of the name that is not within us first.

> The mind is its own place, and of itself
> Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.

We shall return to this subject on another occasion, but we cannot overlook here the fact that Heaven itself is within the Being of God whom only the pure in heart can see. To quote again the supreme poet whose later words I used just now, we may listen to the angel in Milton's *Comus* :—

> Mortals that would follow me,
> Love Virtue, she alone is free ;
> She can teach ye how to climb
> Higher than the starry chime.
> Or if Virtue feeble were,
> Heaven itself would stoop to her.

Next comes *Khshathra*, the Divine Reign. I have been very near the teaching of Christ in what I have portrayed already, but it is almost superfluous to note that when we come to the "Kingdom of God" we are on ground that is peculiarly familiar to the reader of the Gospels. According to the adjective that becomes a fixed epithet in the Later Avesta, it is "to be desired" (*vairya*). So though God is King already, His Kingdom is still future. For man, just because he is the highest of

God's creatures, may not render to his Maker the obedience which the lower creation gives mechanically and of necessity. He must obey God of choice, or not at all. Therefore God's Reign tarries till men have learned that "His Will is our Peace," to use Dante's lovely phrase—till men accept their Divine King to rule over hearts that love His sway. Oh that our imagination could be fired with the thought of Khshathra Vairya, the longed for Reign of God in India! To see the driving out of the *Drujo*, the fiends that torment the souls of millions with a nameless fear, the shapeless idols that haunt the people's minds and demand sacrifice out of their scanty store! To join in the new song that shall rise to the Wise Lord in heaven when at last men's eyes are opened and they know that "God's in His Heaven," and that God is only, wholly and for ever good!

Aramaiti, "Devotion," might seem to be rather a gift of God than an attribute. But God always gives Himself, and that which establishes a vital union between Him and His worshipper's soul may well be called a part of His Being. It is very much as in the Christian New Testament, where we are often doubtful whether "the Spirit" means the Spirit of God, or that part of man's own nature in which God speaks to him. A favourite later title of Aramaiti was "Daughter of Ahur Mazdah," a phrase with which we may compare Wordsworth's sublime address to Duty,

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!

The very ancient—actually Aryan—connection between Aramaiti and the Earth is one of special interest. My friend Professor Williams Jackson of New York—who has had the privilege I enjoy of addressing the Parsis of Bombay—points out that in this capacity "Aramaiti gave continued life of men's bodies, and indestructibility" (*Yasna* XXX. 7). Those were days long before the Magi had introduced the *Dakhma*, and forbidden the "pollution" of the sacred Earth by the interment of a corpse. Like the Achaemenian Kings, the early followers of Zarathushtra were buried, and the Genius of the Earth was conceived as giving new life to bodies that slept in her bosom. I do not at all share the Western prejudice against giving these worn-out bodies to the vultures, any more

than I share the feeling you have against cremation. In a country where vultures are available, to use their swift and thorough work to return to the elements the noisome corpse that once was the home of a living man, seems to me sanitary and economical, and no whit more repulsive than the ghastly dissolution that goes on beneath the earth. But in London, and even at Matheran, within sight of this place, dead Parsis must perforce be buried. And to those whose sensibilities are shocked by such profanation I would recall the words of Zarathushtra which suggested that men may be wrong in imagining the sacred element polluted by that which is only the product of Nature, and a stage in our human progress from glory unto glory. Your Prophet's idea seems rather to be that the purity of Mother Earth is such as to destroy the very impurity of Death, and to give a resurrection of the body itself in God's own good time.

Haurvatât and *Ameretât* are an inseparable pair, representing Salvation here and hereafter, respectively. They are naturally sought within Him who alone can save, and "who only hath immortality," if I may go again to my own Scriptures. That Well-being in this world, and immortality in the world to come, are the gift of Ahura Mazdah, is the last and crowning fact that the doctrine of the Amshaspands brings us. "Every good gift, and every perfect bounty, are from above, and come down from the Father of the Lights." Let us only learn never to look elsewhere for our blessings. "In his right hand" and nowhere else, "are there pleasures for evermore."

These are not the only abstractions that are called *Ahura* in the Gathas. There is *Sraosha*, the great angel of "Obedience," *Ashi*, the "Destiny" that follows men's deserts, *Gêush Urvan*, the "Ox-Soul," heavenly representative (shall we say *fravashi*?) of the patient creature that draws the plough, and therefore of the homely industry of the farmer which the great practical Prophet set in the forefront of the Whole Duty of Man. I need not enlarge further upon these minor hues in the heavenly rainbow. We have seen enough to realise how harmoniously all these elements blend in the Being of the One God. Monotheism has received its noble exposition and its sufficient justification in the Seer's Vision of God.

> The One remains, the many change and pass;
> Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's shadows fly.
> Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
> Stains the white radiance of Eternity
> Until death tramples it to fragments.

He who has seen here the manifold glories that make the light of God shall in the "Endless Lights" see the radiance that is One.

THE DOCTRINE OF EVIL.

There are two ways of attacking the Problem of Evil. One is theoretical and speculative. Philosophers have argued for ages about the Origin of Evil. How can a really almighty God allow in His Universe that which crosses His Will? "Why God not kill debbil?" was the simple form of the question as put by Man Friday in *Robinson Crusoe*. I dare say the philosophers have an answer, but I am not a philosopher. Indeed, I confess I have an amateur answer of my own, which satisfies me from my point of view. But I am not expounding it this afternoon. Nor am I intending to argue with those wise persons who declare there is no Evil. If my house is on fire, my first thought is not to find out how it happened, still less to argue that nothing is there but a perfectly normal chemical process. My first business is to turn on the hose-pipe.

So without either approving or disapproving of the philosophers, I want to come to the purely practical treatment of our problem. We will discuss the Beginning of Evil when we have found out the best way of ending it. And I am glad to say that seems very clearly to have been Zarathushtra's interest in the problem. For your great Prophet had very little use for speculation. He was before all things practical. If he deals with the Origin of Evil, it is only in the spirit of the doctor, who must find out something about the cause of a disease before he can do anything to cure it. Let us try to follow his teaching.

It has its central statement in *Yasna* XXX. a poem the importance of which we cannot overstate in reference to this question. Let me quote the third stanza, which is the crucial one :—

"Now the two primal spirits, who revealed themselves in vision as Twins, are the Better and the Bad in thought and word and action. And between these two the wise once chose aright, the foolish not so."

Is it not clear that what Zarathushtra was mainly thinking of is the Fact of Choice? There are always two directions to be taken. There is the Good, often with a choice of a Better and a Best. There is the Bad with a possibility of a Worse and a Worst of all. If anyone likes to say that Evil existed from all eternity, he is perfectly right if he only means that a thing cannot be Good unless we can conceive of its opposite which is not Good. The "Spirits" are both eternal, if that is all we mean. But the "Two Beliefs," which Zarathushtra has just declared he wishes to proclaim, have nothing to do with the speculative question. The one point for him is that at every step you and I have to *choose* between "the Better and the Bad." He says this great truth came to him "in vision." It was an intuition, the result of a flash of insight rather than of a long logical process. If on the one side he insists that in every thing there is a right and a wrong way, on the other we find him busy not with the mere philosophy of it, but with the practical fact that these two alternatives are like twins: both are always there together, and we must settle for ourselves which of the two we want. To help us to make our choice he goes on to say first the choice of Good will bring us Life, Eternal Life, at the end and secondly that the choice of Good is that which was made by the Creator Spirit, and all who would please the Wise Lord will follow it.

At this point we are faced with a question which is not merely theological. Are the "Two Spirits" mere abstract or logical ideas? Do they merely express the fact of our choice between alternative courses, or are they real spiritual and self-existent Powers? There is a strong tendency among thoughtful people to-day, whether Zoroas-

trians or Christians, to question the objective existence of a Spirit of Evil—of what we might call, adapting Matthew Arnold's phrase, "a stream of tendency, not ourselves, making for unrighteousness." People say that there is nothing outside ourselves that prompts to evil; if the Avesta or the Gospels suggest that a real fiend tempts us, in the same sense in which a bad man might persuade us to something wrong, it is only a metaphor after all. In this matter I have to confess myself, for once, rather old-fashioned. I do not see that there is any sort of objective evidence on this question. We are concerned with what we call spirits, and the very conception of *spirits* implies that no tests known to science could ever be used. No microscope, no chemical formula, no electric apparatus or any such thing, can detect the presence or absence of a spirit: if they could, the so-called spirit would become material at once. There can be no evidence therefore except spiritual evidence. How can I discover whether an impulse towards evil within me comes from myself or is insinuated by a Tempter outside? I cannot tell. But if I am weighing probabilities, I should say that the authority I most reasonably follow is a spiritual genius, a Prophet who in other things has shown that he understands by deep instinct the laws of the spiritual life.

Applying this test for my own satisfaction I naturally ask first what was the thought of Jesus Christ on the question. But today I have to ask what was Zarathushtra's thought. I cannot see any escape from the conviction that he believed in a personal Evil Spirit, and that Jesus did the same. If that is so, what real evidence can we bring to support the negative view?

Of course I have to prove, and not merely assert, that Zarathushtra believed in a real spirit of Evil. It will not be questioned that he believed with all his heart in God, the Spirit of Good. But in what respect does his language about Evil differ from what he says about God? "The holiest Spirit chose Right, he that clothes

himself with the massy heavens as a garment." You cannot doubt that this beautiful phrase describes a real Personality. But in the same line we read that "of these twain spirits the False one chose doing the worst things." Is this a mere abstraction, while the other is a person? Or take that other notable passage (*Yasna* XLV. 2)—

"I will speak of the spirits twain at the first beginning of the world, of whom the Holier thus spake to the Enemy: 'Neither thought nor teachings nor wills nor belief nor words nor deeds nor selves nor souls of us twain agree.'"

It is difficult to believe that the contrasted spirits are not either both personal or both mere logical abstractions. And we have seen that the "Holiest Spirit" is practically identified with the Creator of the Heavens.

What then does your Prophet teach with reference to the nature of Evil? It is curious that the name of the Evil Power which has for two thousand years been typical of your religion has no place at all in the Gathas. In the passage I quoted last, we have set against each other "the Two Spirits," the "Holiest" and the "Enemy." This last word is *angra*, which when combined with *mainyu* "Spirit" makes the familiar name that in Persian took the form Ahriman. This is the only real occurrence of the epithet in the Gathas: it would seem that the Magi of a later age took up the term as a highly appropriate one for the Prince of Darkness, and made it his ordinary name. It is a curious coincidence that the Hebrew *Satan* likewise means "Enemy," like our English *fiend*. The name has great practical value in its recalling the true nature of the warfare that fills our lives. We have but one real enemy, and that is Sin. Nothing else can truly harm us: the worst it can do is to kill the body. Sin knows how to kill the soul.

Zarathushtra's own name for Evil is *Druj*. The name is closely connected with *drauga*, Falsehood, which is so conspicuous on the

Inscription of Darius. In the later Avesta *Druj* means "fiend" in general, and its Sanskrit cognate *druh* has a similar meaning. It seems however fairly certain that Zarathushtra meant it to be the impersonation of Lying. Druj is the opposite of Asha - falsehood against Truth, chaos against Order, wrong against Right. This is the Enemy with whom we have to fight perpetually on the battleground of our own soul. The Inscription of Darius, just referred to, shows us well how manifold that enemy is. The Great King records that Falsehood became rampant in the land, that claimants to the throne committed falsehood, and so on. In one case the appropriateness of the term is obvious, when Gaumàta the Magian pretended to be the murdered brother Cambyses. But the other rebels never pretended to be anybody else than themselves. So falsehood for Darius meant the whole world of evil - lying, disorder, rebellion, wrong. We are reminded of what Herodotus tells us was the education of a Persian boy in the days before Persia's declension—to ride, to shoot, and to be truthful. You cannot possibly make too much of this principle that lies at the centre of your religion in all its history. You must join it with the great trinity of Thought, Word and Deed, and remember that Truth claims supremacy in each. To have truth on the lips but not in the heart, to maintain scrupulous accuracy of statement but to act a lie—this is disloyalty to the queenly virtue that claims to determine every part of life for us. "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts" says our Psalmist to God. Truth is not only our due to other people, it is our supreme duty to our own lives.

To thine own self be true,
And it shall follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

A Greek writer tells us that in body the God of the Persians was like unto Light, and in soul to Truth. In this wider sense, Truth is that of which you can never make too much.

Because Right is right, to follow Right
Were wisdom, in the scorn of consequence.

She will lead us often into strange and difficult places—into persecution, and misrepresentation, into pain and loss and sometimes death itself. That must not daunt our resolution. For if Truth lead us into a wilderness, she knows how to make the wilderness blossom as the rose.

The hideous picture of the Druj in the Avesta has helped us by contrast to realise better the surpassing loveliness of Truth, her ceaseless foe and ultimate conqueror. I return to the Prophet's story of the beginnings of Evil before it came among men. As everywhere else, his central interest in the story is practical. He tells us (*Yasna* XXX. 6)

" Between these two [spirits] the Daevas also chose not aright, for infatuation came upon them as they took counsel together, so that they chose the Worst Thought. Then they rushed together to Violence, that they might enfeeble the world of man. "

Who are these *Daevas*? The word is obviously identical with the Indian *Deva*, which is the regular word for God. Further West you find the same word everywhere. It is the Latin *Deus* and *divus*, from which we get our word *deity* and *divine*. It gave a name to one of the chief gods of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, after whom *Tues*day was named. In the Rigveda it still is associated with the bright and glorious powers of nature, the Sun, the Winds, the Sky, which the common ancestors of Hindu and Parsi worshipped together in the north country, before the Indian tribes moved southwards into the Panjab, or Zarathushtra preached in Iran. How then does Zarathushtra give this word the meaning of *demon* ? Because of those whose gods they were. Savage wandering Huns, belonging to the same people as the quiet agricultural folk whom the prophet taught to worship a higher God than the old Nature Powers, raided the farms, stole the cattle, slew the unwarlike husbandman, and invoked the blessing of their *Daeva* upon their deeds of blood and wrong. No wonder Zarathushtra taught that these old gods had " chosen " Evil, like their worshippers : " robber gangs, both Daevas and men, " he coupled together in one condemnation (*Yasna* XXXIV. 5). One of the

worst of these gods was Soma, as the Indians called him. Originally a drink of immortality—whence his epithet *dûraosha*, "Averter of Death"—he became a mere intoxicant, under the brutalising powers of which the raiders did their savage deeds. You will be surprised to hear that the name reappears in the beneficent angel Haoma of the Later Avesta. Before that day the very secret of brewing the foul intoxicant had been happily lost, and Haoma has only the name in common with the "Averter of Death" whom the Prophet condemns so emphatically. Drunkenness is among the foulest of evils; and short though the Gathas are, the great teacher does not forget to include more than one fierce denunciation of that outrage on our humanity.

Let us learn from all this early history how our conception of God is bound up with our conduct, and rises and falls with it. A high Doctrine of God does not always carry with it right actions and beneficent life. The Turk has exterminated the Armenians with the name of Allah the Compassionate on his lips. The Kaiser has called "Gott" to help in his butchery of women and children, till his religion has moved the angry scorn of the whole world. The theory of religion may remain, with its exalted formulae intact, but the word "God" has sunk to the depths at which the worshipper lives. We need seek no elaborate theories to account for the degeneration of this old word for God. The word has degenerated in India at least as much as in Iran. Is not Kali herself a "Goddess?" And what honest person, who contemplates the lust and blood that mark her worship could hesitate to translate *devi* by "devil?"

And there is another lesson I would draw, and show how polytheism is related to the Doctrine of Evil. Our Aryan forefathers were polytheists, and because they knew no better, their religion was capable of elevating them. It is when a better ideal is presented that the old ideals become debased. Zarathushtra gave us profound truth when he spoke so often of "the Better" instead of "the Good." For sometimes "the Good is enemy of the Best": men are satisfied with the lower ideal, which had much good in it, and thus turn away from that which is higher. So religion becomes superstition, for

"superstition" means simply *survival*, the survival of childish things in the life of an adult. The old Iranian freebooters became *daevayasna*, or demon-worshippers, because they clung to what *had been* good. Something far better was offered them and they refused it: the old Good thus became Evil. We may do just the same to-day. Do you remember that wonderful meditation of Tennyson's Guinevere over her guilty love for Lancelot?

> Ah my God!
> What might I not have made of Thy fair world
> Had I but loved Thy highest creature here?
> It was my duty to have loved the highest,
> It surely was my profit had I known,
> It would have been my pleasure had I seen.
> We needs must love the highest when we see it,
> Not Lancelot, nor another.

Lancelot was a brave and noble knight. But degradation came both to the Queen and to him, when she preferred him to Arthur. And the supreme tragedy for you and me may come when having seen a vision of the Best we remain content with that which is only Good, and becomes Bad by the preference.

Let me illustrate this working of ideals of God by a specific point that will appeal to you. Our Aryan forefathers worshipped the Sun, among other powers of nature. By "worship" I mean not simply reverence for what is very sacred, a symbol of Deity so splendid that man bows his head before a glory that calls the thought of God overwhelmingly into the mind and heart. In that sense you yourselves are Sun-worshippers, and I have a strong fellow-feeling with you. To watch that kingly glory sink into the sea, or spring up to follow the rosy-fingered Dawn, how it fills the soul with awe! how sure we feel that God is passing by! The simple mind of primitive man goes further: he thinks that radiant Sun to be a god, and not only the grandest of the works of God. We should not blame him, for he bows down to the greatest thing he knows. But when a Zarathushtra comes, and tells him that the Wise Lord who-

made that Sun is greater than all His works, if he goes on worshipping the Sun instead of the Creator, he makes his very worship into superstition, and enters the downward way. He has seen the Highest, and then has been content to love only that which he knows to be lower. And after that, the Sun himself can never again be to him what he was before. For there has come an ethical failure into his soul, and it spoils his worship, since worship is a means to an end which he has set aside. Some one has said "Conduct is religion, and religion is conduct." Religion is a great deal more than that, but it is perfectly true to call conduct the *aim* of religion, and the *test* of religion. Religion which only means a creed—even a good one—leaves the man just where he was before. It must be a mighty inspiration, which so brings a man into the presense of his Maker that he cannot help striving constantly to be what a holy God would have him be. But if he deliberately rejects the vision of the Holy One, and goes back upon a deity who is wholly inanimate, however splendid, and however full of spiritual teaching to those who look upon him as a symbol of his Creator, the man loses a mighty impulse towards goodness, and inevitably goes down the steep descent into wrong.

I was speaking just now of the picture Zarathushtra sketches in one or two life-like outlines, showing how the old gods of Iran fell from their high estate and were transformed into demons. Equally instructive, though obscure from its brevity, is his description of the entrance of Evil into the world of man. I can only give you the story as I read it, referring to my own discussion elsewhere for argument in its favour.* Zarathushtra declares (*Yasna* XXXII. 8)

"To these sinners belonged, 'its said, Yima the son of Vivahvant, who desiring to satisfy mortals gave to our people portions of bull's flesh to eat."

The "bull's flesh" refers, as I believe, to the old myth of the fat of the primeval Bull which is to be given to man at the Regeneration to make them immortal. Three stanzas before this the

* See *Early Zoroastrianism* (Hibbert Lectures), pp. 148-150.

demons are said to have "defrauded men of good life and immortality." If I read this rightly, we have an entirely independent, and therefore all the more striking coincidence with the profound allegory in the Fall-story of the Christian Scriptures, regarding

the fruit
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
Brought death into this world, with all our woe.

Yima, tempted by the Daevas, gave to men that which was to make them immortal—before the time! Into a myth that had no visible moral, the great Prophet—after his wont—imported deep teaching of his own. God's will only is our peace, as Dante says, and we must accept what He wills, when He wills. To attempt to snatch His blessing in any other way is to commit Sin, and Sin would make even Immortality into a hell.

Let me close with summing up Zarathushtra's teaching as to the way we must meet the spirit of Evil. In my first address I reminded you what loftiness he attained in refusing to propitiate the Devil. Mithraism might dedicate an altar "To the God Arimanius": the followers of Zarathushtra have never bowed the knee there. With Evil there is no truce and no parley. We must fight and never stop fighting, till Evil lies prostrate and slain beneath the feet of God. And how is the fight to be waged? The Prophet did not forbid what Great Britain and her Allies have been forced into adopting, in this mighty struggle against organised Wrong. Three times in the Gathas he speaks approvingly of physical resistance to such Evil as presented itself in the raids of the brigands upon his people's farmsteads. But his weapons in the struggle were generally of a very different kind. Zarathushtra knew well that the right cause has not always might on its side, and will not always win.

"Right for ever on the scaffold, Wrong for ever on the throne," is a too despairing picture even of this imperfect world, thrown out of gear by man's yielding to a wrong use of his free will. But there is a weapon that in God's own time must always conquer. Good thoughts, good words, good deeds will prevail in the perfect world

if not here below. Even he who is killed for the Truth only goes to wear a crown of life : he who fights for God may be slain, but never conquered.

And what are these good thoughts and words and deeds ? In all religions—not excepting certain forms of Christianity—there has appeared the tendency to degrade them into mere magic. "Good deeds" are reduced to sacrifice, and we have the dismal system of the Brahmanas, by which man may conquer the very gods if only with punctilious care he performs a long series of mechanical, meaningless rituals. "Good words" become *manthras* : so many *Paternosters*, so many *Ashem vohus*, even when repeated parrot-wise by those who have no idea of their meaning, will keep the fiends at bay. "Good thoughts" degenerate iuto profitless "meditation" with the mind blank, or busied only with curious speculation on things that do not matter. Zarathushtra knows nothing of all these. In the man who understands, to plough a field is a more religious act than any sacrifice ; to say a word of comfort to a despairing or bereaved heart reaches the ear of God more surely than any *manthra*; and to think out practical schemes of benevolence pleases the divine Good Thought better than all the fakir's meditation. I do not undervalue sacrifice or ritual, if it keeps its appointed place as a help heavenward. But I will not here anticipate the subject of my concluding lecture. Here I will only further remind the discouraged of the assurance that God comes more than half way to meet the soul that honestly strives to please Him. "Aramaiti pleads with the wavering spirit," says the prophet. He who feels the power of Evil, around him and within him, too strong for his feeble powers, has his refuge in Aramaiti—in that presence of God's own Spirit which comes to help man in his direct need. It is a truth that speaks to me in the clear strong tones of my own Christ, in the experience of a great Christian, well-nigh beaten down in the sore strife:—

And he hath said unto me, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for its power is made perfect in weakness."

SOUL AND BODY.

I may be treading on some rather dangerous ground this afternoon, and I think it advisable to begin with some frank words by way of introduction. I need hardly explain that after the months I have enjoyed in the midst of your community I am not ignorant of the sharp division of opinion that prevails among you on religious questions. I am neither surprised or distressed by the discovery of such differences. Human temperaments differ naturally and inevitably, and the difference is a sign of healthy independence, if only we have learnt that first of all lessons, how to "*agree* to differ." But what I am concerned about is my own relation to your party divisions. I shall undoubtedly say some things this very afternoon which will convince some strong partisan here that I am the mouthpiece of his own or of the other side in the controversies that are going on among you. My initial warning therefore is simply that you must all keep your ears open to the end, as you will quite certainly hear something which will produce a diametrically opposite impression! It is in the nature of things impossible for one who is not a Parsi to side with either party among you. There is a great deal in the programme of both parties that I can cordially appreciate. The differences are easily understood by one who stands outside as a sympathetic onlooker. I see the strong points of both positions, and perhaps the most serious dangers of each, more clearly because of my own detached position. Perhaps, with that preface, I can go on to speak quite freely. I shall make the uncompromising party man smile at one point and frown at another; but I hope that even he will allow the smiles and frowns to neutralise one another, and will admit that I am really impartial after all, as one in my position ought to be.

"Soul" and "Body" are the simplest and purest English words we can find to express the great antithesis that lies at the root of every discussion on the subject of religion. If you prefer Latin, you can call the two fields "spiritual" and "material;" and if you want

your own Avestan, *mainyava* and *astvant* will express them. The supreme practical question before us all is : between these two which is going to be master ? On our answer to that question depends our whole future.

You will observe that in my definition I have put aside the purely speculative side. There is a philosophy which takes the name of " materialism, " because it undertakes to explain mind in terms of matter, and do away with the distinction between the two. It used to be fairly popular in some scientific circles of the West, but we hear less of it nowadays. It is getting to be more of a question whether we ought not to derive the material from the spiritual. These are abstruse problems of great interest. But I am not concerned with them today. For Zarathushtra himself was not interested in them at all nor was Jesus Christ. Jesus put the great practical question in familiar words, " What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul ! Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul ? " Men are divided into those whose ideal it is to " gain the whole world " and those who put first the saving of the soul—their own and other people's. Between these two there is not the faintest doubt as to your great Prophet's choice. He is all for the saving of the soul : the spiritual, not the material, stands first with him. Here again in expounding your religion I am keeping close to my own.

What is the Spiritual ? I define it in the broadest way as the world of thought and ideas and personality—all that cannot be seen or analysed. We can examine its tools, tools without which it cannot work, at least under the conditions of the world we know. We do not need telling that the brain is the organ of thought. For all I know, or care, it may be possible to trace all the minutest differences between one man's character and gifts and another's to the tiny differences between their brains. But my brain is not myself. It is only the piano on which I play. Here am I with a simple movement of a Beethoven Sanata of which I am very fond. But I have not got my piano out here, and therefore I cannot bring that

music out of my mind, so that it can be heard. And meanwhile there is my piano shut up at home, all silent too—when I get home again, I may sit at my piano and bring out the music. But if my brain is the piano, who is the player ? " I, " of course. What is " I " ? It is the shortest and most incomprehensible word in lauguage, almost as short and quite as incomprehensible as " God. " And those two little words, *God* and *I*, are at the centre of what we call the " Spiritual. " There have been people who deny the former. Nobody can either deny or explain the latter ; and till they can either deny or explain " I, " they might as well save themselves the trouble of denying " God, " the " I " of the Universe, without whom all its movements are as impossible to explain as a piano playing without a human hand or human contrivance to strike the keys.

Now if the Spiritual is a real fact, it must be the most important fact in life. " What will a man give in exchange for his Self ? " What indeed ? how many crores of rupees will buy a new Self ? An old friend of mine told me how he went to see a man of business who was said to be the richest man in the world. He seemed utterly discontented, suspicious, miserable: all his millions would not buy him a day's hapiness. Another time I heard of a poor old bedridden woman who lay helpless in a garret in Manchester. The roof over her bed was full of holes, through which the rain dripped. But when the night was clear she used to watch the stars through those holes. She knew them as they passed, and she called each one by the name of one of her blessings—but there were not stars enough ! Whence this strange difference between the miserable millionaire and the raidiantly happy poor Christian woman ? It lay in the " I. " The one was a materialist, the other was spiritual. The one had gained the whole world, the other had cultivated her soul. The one thought only of gold, the other of God.

Let me point out, before I go further, how stupendously important is this great issue for the understanding of the world strife today. Do you remember that magnificent cartoon in *Punch* where Kaiser is sneering at King Albert of Belgium, who has " lost everything " ?

"Not my soul," is the reply. Yes, Belgium has lost everything else, but we see that she will rise out of this appalling tragedy a new creation, enriched with a new self-respect and with the sympathy and admiration of the world. She might have yielded to superior force, knowing well that Britain and France would never perjure themselves and attack her. She preferred to keep her word, and suffer for it; and by that deed she won what in all the future will be worth more to her than if Germany had doubled her territory in reward for doing a disgraceful thing. It *pays*, even in this world, to lose everything but keep the soul!

But the War illustrates my point in a still more far-reaching way. What are we fighting for? "A scrap of paper," says Germany with a scornful sneer. Yes, we are: never was a truer word spoken. It was that scrap of paper, with our pledged word upon it, that united the British people as one man when Germany declared that Might is Right and solemn treaties only conveniences to deceive the simple-minded. We for whom Peace is a vital part of our religion felt then that war could not be avoided without becoming gulity of something even worse. And how did Germany—cultured, brainy Germany—descend to such a level? Why, by convincing herself that to gain the whole world was the first necessity. She had not forgotten her soul: indeed she talked a great deal about it. But she deluded herself into believing that she was going to save her own soul and everybody else's by Force. And now all the world see clearly—perhaps even Germany is beginning to see—that Force is a damnable master, if sometimes an indispensable servant. Greater wisdom than the Kaiser's laid it down that to gain the soul we must lose it: the man who is ready to lose his life rather than do wrong, is the man who wins in the end. This is what is meant when we declare that the Soul is the supreme reality, which outweights everything else in life.

Let me draw one further lesson. We all know now that the present awful struggle rises out of a long and partly unconscious preparation in the spiritual world. The national motto, "Germany above

everything," has been working itself out in the school and the class-room, and producing results undreamt of by multitudes who have taken in the subtle poison. Patriotism is a very fine thing, but the moral wreck of Germany shows us what happens when it steps from second into first place, which belongs to something higer still. If we learn to sing "Britain above everything" or "India above everything," we are only preparing to ruin Britain or India as Germany has been ruined. "Righteousness exalteth a nation," and we must put Righteousness first if we would prosper even in material things. One of our foremost British admirals sent home a message not long ago that we could not hope to win the war "until religious revival takes place at home." Yes, the spiritual must take the first place, or ruin follows. Materialism utters the old proverb "Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost!" And religion replies "Every man for his neighbour, and God for us all!" It is that motto that is going to win.

All that I have been trying to say is very closely connected with your own religion, and I have not been merely digressing upon a subject of present-day interest with some sort of a distant connexion. The rankest of all the poisons that have infected the German mind is that which we connect with the name of Nietzsche. And the best known work of that mad and pestilent genius is actually called "Thus Spake Zarathushtra." I need hardly tell *you* that there is nothing of your Prophet in that book but the name; and I share fully the indignation you must feel when his name is so foully misused for doctrines he would have loathed beyond most men. I want to come back now to emphasise another important side of his teaching about Spirit and Matter, the two hemispheres of existence. There is another plane of cleavage, with which we have already been concerned, producing the hemispheres of Good and Evil. Now there have been philosophers who assert that these two planes coincide—that the hemisphere of Spirit is that of Good, and the hemisphere of Matter is that of Evil. That doctrine was often taught by the thinkers of ancient Greece, and it infected early Christianity and did much harm. The

Gnostics were people who by their name claimed "insight" or "clairvoyance" beyond other folks; and they answer pretty well to the Theosophists of to-day. Gnosticism or Theosophy may be briefly defined as the gentle art of professing to see through a stone wall. One conspicuous tenet of the Gnostics was asceticism, a practice which survived through the middle ages and exists to-day. Its theory is that the body and all its impulses are evil, and that the soul can only perfect itself by ill-treating the body, until at last it is released from its prison. You see at once that this doctrine is a fanatical exaggeration of the great truth I have been insisting on throughout this lecture. I have urged that Spirit must be master and Matter must be servant. Asceticism draws the conclusion that the servant ought to be beaten and starved, lest he should attempt to make himself master. Sometimes, as we know well in this country, asceticism argues that the man's soul will win power in the world of spirit by the discipline involved in inflicting pain on the body.

Far be it from me to speak harshly of the ascetic or the fakir. In so far as he voluntarily accepts bodily privation and pain, in order to win some spiritual good, I regard him as greatly superior to the man whose only ideal is bodily or even intellectual pleasure, with Religion thrust out. Moreover there is no doubt that asceticism, however exaggerated, has in some periods of history done good service by the very violence of its protest against sensuality. Some races and some individuals, in certain periods of their development, find it impossible to observe moderation in the use of the gifts of Nature. (I use that phrase lest anyone should think I include alcohol in my argument—an artificial poison and not a "gift of nature," for which on many grounds there is, in my opinion, no legitimate habitual use at all.) For such the only hope may be complete abstinence from things in themselves harmless when properly used, just because they are found to endanger what is much more important. As Jesus put it, if our right hand ensnares us, we should cut it off, because it is better for us to enter into life maimed, than to keep the body intact only to be cast into hell.

Nevertheless, there can be no question that the whole theory of Asceticism is distorted and false, and to be discarded as a subtle and very real danger. I need hardly stop to argue about ascetic practice which is only undertaken in order to win some occult power. This is in the last analysis nothing but a virulent form of self-aggrandisement, more deadly than most of the Protean forms of selfishness. It is peculiarly pitiful in that selfishness is here deluding itself so completely. The man whose selfish lust is for power or wealth does at least gain his world. He who dreams of conquering the Gods by the power of his *tapas* loses the world and loses his soul as well.

But I have a more formidable indictment to deliver against asceticism, in the name of Zoroastrianism, and Christianity also—for I can accept no doctrine as belonging to my own religion except when clearly taught in the New Testament where most assuredly asceticism finds no place. We are told that a Sassanian King violently attacked contemporary Christianity because of its asceticism. He was perfectly right, and in that respect a better Christian than the Christians around him! As to the attitude of your own religion, there has never been any hesitation from the first. Zarathushtra emphatically recognised a world of spiritual evil, and a world of material good. The doctrine that matter is evil is a libel on the Creator. It means reversing the simple healthy teaching of our Book of Genesis: the Creator must thus "look upon everything that he had made, and lo! it was very"—Evil! How much saner is the doctrine that "every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it is sanctified by the word of God and by prayer"! That doctrine persists in your religion. As late as the Vendidad it is still laid down that the man who has a family is superior to the celibate, the man who eats and drinks superior to him that fasts. Of course this is normally undeniable. God gave us our bodies to be tools for high and holy work, and it is as much our duty to keep them fit for their task as it is the duty of a carpenter to prevent his chisel and saw from becoming blunt and rusty. God made us male and female that

the human family might be perpetuated by the power of Love, the holiest and purest thing in the world. But in all this there is an attendant peril, even as you read in the Vendidad about the beautiful creations of Ahura Mazdah, to each of which Angra Mainyu counter-created plagues. It is in the constitution of things as they are—in a world where man has used his freedom to disobey the will of God—that the foul is very near the fair. God gives us food and drink and healthful exercise, to make our bodies strong and beautiful for Him. And men turn these gifts into means of swinish indulgence. Nay, such a phrase is unfair to the swine, which was made for nothing better, and fulfils its end in life! Or men turn the cultivation of the body into an end in itself, forgetting its use as a tool of the soul—as though the carpenter were to spend his time polishing and sharpening the chisel and saw, only to keep them in a glass case for the admiration of spectators. God gave His gift of Love that Home might be the most sacred place on earth, and nearest to His Heaven. And man has turned Love into Lust, and out of the highest and purest made that which befouls and degrades beyond any of the sins that stain our poor humanity. Such are the consequences of dethroning Spirit from the lord-ship over Matter to which God appointed it in the beginning.

The pivot of Zarathushtra's rule as to the relations of Soul and Body is the Award in the Hereafter, which is to be our subject next week. Our present subject invites us to examine the root and stem from which will bloom those flowers of Paradise. You will find that your Prophet lays all the emphasis on the Self—*daena*, "the sum of a man's spiritual and religious characteristics," as the dictionary definition has it. "What we have been makes us what we are"—and what we shall be. "To such an existence your own Self shall bring you by your acts"—"Their own Soul and Self shall torment them"—such are two typical sayings of Zarathushtra about the wicked and their future (*Yasna* XXXI. 20, XLVI. 11), who on the other hand speaks of the man "who links his own Self with Good Thought" (XLIX. 5). In such words the Prophet insists that retribu-

tion is no arbitrary judgment from outside. When we read that God is our Judge, we are not contradicting the equally plain declaration that a man's Self judges him. For God judges through his inexorable law that a man must reap what he has sown. He who sows corn will reap corn : he who sows dub grass will reap nothing else.

There is one aspect of Zarathushtra's doctrine of the *Daena* or Self on which I want to make a special comment. You must have noticed that Zarathushtra absolutely ignores another word for the spiritual part of man, which in the later Avesta is most conspicuous. I mean *fravashi* or *frohar*. Why did he leave that most characteristic idea out of his system ? We can have no doubt that it is much older than his time. The fact is that it has a double ancestry. On the one side there is the conception of the spiritual counterpart of individuals and communities, tending to develop into the idea of a guardian angel. I do not feel at all sure that Zarathushtra ever met with this conception, which may well have come in from a side track at a later time. But another and more deeply rooted conception is that of the Fravashis as ancestor-spirits simply, inheritors of all the primeval ideas connected in most countries with the cult of the Dead. Like other polytheistic elements, this was regularised in the Sassanian Reform when the supremacy of Ahura Mazdah as the only object of real worship was secured. But we may well believe that Zarathushtra left out the Fravashis of set purpose, because they conflicted, like the Yazatas, with the doctrine of monotheism. He substituted the *Daena*, or self. The Fravashi was always "the fravashi of the pious" —compare the Latin name *manes*, "good folk," for the dead. And Zarathushtra did not care for a term which implied a sort of *ex officio* goodness. I shall return to this silence of Zarathushtra for a very practical reason later.

But now I want to pass on to some widely different attitudes towards the spiritual, which divide your community as they divide, in one form or another, every thinking community in the world. I have been giving not a few practical examples of the old adage that one travels most safely along the middle course. We shall

find that in belief as well as in conduct the danger is always apparent of running into one or other of two extremes; and by exhibiting the most dangerous extremes visible to-day I may plead effectively for the golden mean.

And first there is the extreme of defect. The Doctrine of the Spiritual does not pretend to be easy. We cannot demonstrate it as we may demonstrate the existence of a chemical element, or the truth of an event in history. "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned," says Paul; and there will always be men in whom the spiritual sense is weak, and the passion for objective evidence strong. Such men will not dogmatically declare that the Spiritual is unreal. If they have the scientific temper they know that it is as unscientific to deny as it is to assert the existence of that which by its very definition lies outside the range of ordinary evidence. If we were limited to the use of the microscope, we should find it difficult to prove or disprove the existence of the air. The attitude taken by these men is that of simple agnosticism. "How can any one possibly tell?" is their formula, and I believe there are not a few of your own thoughtful men who have come to that position. The difficulties of the supernatural appeal to them acutely. They cannot satisfy themselves as they try to face the problems of life on a basis of Theism. I would not minimise those difficulties. Can we reasonably expect these tremendous problems to be easy? It is stupendously difficult to explain the most fundamental facts of biology. The complexity and the hidden powers of protoplasm may be less dark to us some day than they are now; but spirit itself is not fuller of mystery than is the ultimate element of life from which may come a starfish or a Shakespeare. A truly scientific mind is forced to be agnostic on some of the very earliest questions presented by the study of Matter. How much more difficult still must it be to explain the phenomena of what can never be seen or touched. We should have an excellent reason for disbelieving in the Spiritual if we were expected to find it easy? Would not those who are so much impressed by the difficulties of the Spiritual do wisely if they turned the matter upside down, and asked whether it is easy to explain the world *without*

the Spiritual? Can a sober scientific thinker really hope to show that the world is simply a stupendous machine which winds itself up and runs down in endless succession? Is such a theory seriously presented to us as *easier* than the belief in a Supreme Intelligence which is at work in the universe? When once that negative evidence has been grasped, a candid seeker after Truth may begin to gather the evidence for the Spiritual which comes from human experience. To set down as mere illusion the strongest of all convictions in the mind of innumerable men and women in every country and time, is surely most unwarrantable presumption. The conviction has evidenced itself by its work, and the easy assumption that it is a widely extended hallucination only starts a new crop of insoluble questions.

Whoso hath felt the spirit of the Highest,
Cannot confound or doubt Him or deny;
Yea, with one voice, O world, though thou deniest,
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.

So in mighty chorus declare multitudes of honest and sincere souls, including a large number of the keenest of brain and most scientific in temper. How can you assert that these are wrong, simply because *you* have not "felt the Spirit of the Highest?" Is it not rather as if a stone-deaf man denied the existence of music? Those of us who *know* that the Spiritual is a Fact, enshrined in our deepest consciousness, would only plead with our agnostic or wavering brethren to take into account others' experience as well as their own. Is it really in accordance with reason to deny or even doubt the existence of that which continues the chain of Being into regions above us, and offers at least a partial solution of mysteries to which materialism has no key? The lines are only hackneyed because they are so true in which Hamlet warns his friend,—

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

From the peril of defect let me turn to the peril of excess, on which I shall ask you to allow me great frankness. To doubt or deny the Spiritual is a very grievous loss to a man. But no less grievous is it to rob it of its mystery, and turn the mind to speculate on what cannot

be known, and what would do us no good if it were known. I have said enough to indicate that I am going to speak of the peril of Theosophy as something essentially alien to your religion and inconsistent with its whole scheme of thought. My concern for your true Zoroastrian orthodoxy here is very sincere and deep. It is because I know how sane and sound is the teaching of your prophet on the mysteries of the Spiritual that I am distressed when I find Parsis turning away to blind guides. One very distinguished Parsi has told me that in his opinion Theosophy has done much to revive the sense of the Spiritual in the community. But what has Theosophy to offer that will add an anna's worth to the weath of the Gathas ? Do you really believe that Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater—judicially branded with teaching immoral doctrine are prophets in thesuccession of your great, pure, wise Zarathushtra ? And can you for a moment think that speculation such as may be read in Mr. Leadbeater's Primer will strengthen any boy's belief in the Spiritual, when it is based on such foundations as Zarathushtra laid ? I hope you will allow that I, though not one of your community, have really been building on that foundation. Is it possible to claim that the Theosophic superstructure could be accommodated on that rock at all ? Of course I do not forget that since Adyar took to its latest ways Parsi leaders have left it severely alone. Might they not go further, and reflet that a system which has so discredited itself by its later developments is likely to have had something rotten about it from the first ?

One of your number, whose piety and integrity I appreciate as much as I value his friendship, has urged upon me the undeniable fact that the Gathas are only a fragment of Zarathushtra's teaching : are we not then at liberty to fill up the gaps with speculation ? My answer is, Yes, *provided our additions are consistent with the extant teaching.* We see one side of the Moon, and the other side is for ever hidden. We may speculate about it, but it is clear that we should be coining absurdities if we pictured there a world like our own, when we know that this side is so different. Even so, if an " orthodox " Zoroastrian

adopts from another religion, incomparably inferior to his own, a doctrine which definitely contradicts indisputably authentic doctrines of Zarathushtra, I submit that he has really become as "heterodox" as any "Reformer"! Of course I do not personally blame him for following any doctrine his mind and conscience approve : I do not myself accept Zarathushtra's teaching because it has authoritative claims upon me, but simply because it approves itself to my mind and conscience as true. That is even the ground of my acceptance of the teaching of my own Supreme Master, Jesus Christ. He does not come to me with a demand that I should believe Him because of the divine authority that belongs to his words : God does not thus dragoon the heart He made, and dowered with freedom accountable to Himself alone. No one may dictate to my conscience, which God appointed to be, for me, the ultimate seat of authority in religion. God himself refuses to do so, and any man or community of men presuming thus to dictate He sternly forbids. Where God only appeals, who shall dare to command ? When therefore I venture to plead in Zarathushtra's name with Parsis who have caught a specially Indian infection, I am not attempting to overwhelm them with authority, but to make an appeal to their reason. The dogma of Reincarnation has come to Parsis through Theosophy, which for all its pretence of mingling good from all religions is only a new disguise of Hinduism after all. *Karma* is a relatively late theory, but it has taken an extraordinarily firm hold in this country. It is absent from the Rigveda, as you may read in Professor Macdonell's authoritative work. It is still more emphatically absent from the Avesta, and is accordingly not Aryan, nor known to Zarathushtra. Those who would try to make room for it in the Parsi system quote the fact that the fravashis are pre-existent. True, though this would be found of little use if we followed it up a little further. But Parsi theology emphatically shows that the Fravashi—except when it is attached to a whole community—never belongs to more than one individual, with whose soul it unites itself at death. And we have seen that Zarathushtra ignored even the Fravashi, and laid all stress on the Self, which is to persist after death and receive the due reward of its deeds, words and thoughts,

accumulated during earthly life. The whole of your Prophet's teaching may be concentrated in Paul's great declaration, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." He, not another!

Those of you who attach great weight to the conclusions of natural science will not fail to note how impossible it is to square the doctrine of Reincarnation with the central principle of Heredity. Our mental and physical constitution is attached to a long succession of ancestors, who bequeathed to us the material frame which is to be the tool of our Soul. And everywhere we see that the faculties which give the soul its opportunity, and the temptations which are its problem and its testing, come from the past. How hopeless to fit such facts into a system which makes that past a succession of lives unconnected with one another!

Now why am I so much concerned by the spread of this *karma* doctrine among Parsis? Because it is no mere idle speculation, but an idea that lies at the root of all the saddest things in India. Why does the poor little child widow suffer the loss of her happy childhood, and grow up to a life of drudgery and pain? Why is a pariah object of loathing to a Brahman, his fellow man, and often enough his equal or superior in all that makes a man? It is *karma* that is responsible. Misfortune is evidence of wrong deeds in a previous existence, and it becomes a cherished duty to kick one who is down. Chivalry, which bids the strong and fortunate take pride in bestowing their best on the weak and the unhappy, never has a chance where the doctrine of *karma* reigns. Sweep that doctrine out of the Indian mind, and plant instead the virile teaching of Zarathushtra—and Jesus—on personal responsibility, and India will lift her head among the nations as high as her most loyal sons desire. "Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free."

But I am told the *Karma* doctrine enshrines the great ethical truth of Retribution. So no doubt it would, if you could graft upon it a doctrine of recollection. Tell that baby "widow" that in previous existence she committed murder, and if she remembers the deed, she may grow up with humble acceptance of inhuman cruelty as a purgatory

out of which she may emerge into happier life one day. But dipped as her soul has been in the River of Oblivion, how is she to learn the lesson of her past? The other day our cat jumped on a sideboard and threw a glass down. To teach that cat a useful lesson, I caught her and brought her up to the fragments, where I soused her well in water. Suppose I had waited till next day, and in another room administered discipline, how could the poor beast know what I meant her to avoid? This is a homely illustration, but I think it carries a great truth. Punishment becomes purely vindictive when the victim knows nothing of the connexion between punishment and wrong-doing. It is quite futile to call in the subconscious self, and make that the seat of continuous identity. If the link of memory is irrecoverable, retribution ceases to be a moral doctrine at all. The selfish man, told that he will suffer severely in another life for the cruel wrong he does now, will only reply "What matter? I shall not know. I shall be another person altogether."

Against this unmoral, or rather immoral, travesty of the doctrine of Retribution, we will next week set the deep, true doctrine so passionately preached by Zarathushtra.

THE FUTURE EXISTENCE.

One of the very first questions we ask about a religion concerns its view of the Hereafter. It would be quite wrong to say that the possession of a doctrine of future rewards and punishments is the hallmark of a religion. It all depends on the character of the heaven and hell thus conceived, and on the closeness of its connexion with conduct. Little more than two thousand years ago, the Jews had practically no doctrine of a Future Life. In the grave, they sadly sang, there was no more happy communion with their God : the other world was a world of shadows and utter gloom. At the same period my own barbaric ancestors possessed a fully developed belief in a blissful Hereafter, where slain warriors fought their battles over again and spent the night over the flowing bowl. Even so today millions of Moslems believe in a sensual paradise to which you may gain admission by falling in a "holy" war,—always providing your body is not burnt! What is the use of such systems, where the hope of heaven does less than nothing to purify and uplift the present life ? Better far the negative of the ancient Jew, who was taught to serve God and do righteousness without hope of future reward.

Another vital question we must ask concerns the path by which a religion attained its doctrine of immortality. We have to remember that Truth is not a commodity we can buy ready-made—not if it is to fit us and prove a shelter against the rough weather of life. Everything depends on the way we get it. Truth that is merely taken on authority from somebody else, even if it be sound and good, will not bring the blessing that comes from truth painfully and laboriously won by the travail of our soul. And Truth that comes by way of the higher and more spiritual realities is worth a great deal more than an identically formulated truth that was attained through meaner thoughts. This applies very

profoundly to the great truth that when a man dies he will live again. How do men come to that belief, so passionately, so wistfully held by most of the human race?

Very often it has been reached through the path of magic and mysteries. The ancient Greeks reached it in secret rituals which opened the prison house and gave men life. The Indian in Vedic days quaffed his Soma, and believed the magic draught gave life in an afterworld. More thoughtful minds found an evidence in nature which satisfied their intellect when magic had lost its power. It was the argument so magnificently set in Milton's great elegy—

> So sinks the Daystar in the ocean bed,
> And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
> And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
> Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
> So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high.

The poet of a fine hymn in the Rigveda thus apostrophises the Dawn as *Ketur Amrtasya*, "the banner of immortality." It is a fine and splendid thought. All Nature is subject to a law of death and resurrection. The sad Roman could wail in poignant verse: "Suns can set and rise again: for us, when once Life's brief daylight fades, there abides but one eternal night to be slept through." A deeper poetry and more hopeful insight inferred rather that the unfailing return of dawn after sunset, of spring after winter, is a parable that bids us believe in the victory of life for God's highest creation, when we have seen it in the lower.

Compare with this the path by which Israel struggled late and painfully into the great Hope. It was in the days of political eclipse and individual suffering, when life was one unrelieved darkness for those who loved their country. The loss of all earthly comfort drove pious souls

more and more upon their God, and communion with Him became increasingly precious as life brought less of Joy. To such men there came the great venture of faith : " If the Eternal God is *my* refuge, if He bids me call Him *my* God, surely He cannot leave one whom He loves to the grave ? I must therefore share His immortality. " The doctrine of the Hereafter thus came to Israel's saints through the highest of all elements in religion—a personal communion with a God who is holy, loving and almighty. We are not surprised to hear such a doctrine of immortality endorsed by the voice of Jesus, and so handed on to the religion which was to spread that truth through the world.

These general considerations prepare us for examining Zarathushtra's doctrine of the Hereafter, which is of course our subject this afternoon. No one who even casually reads the Gathas can fail to see the Prophet's insistence on rewards and punishments after death. It pervades the whole of his thought, and the obliteration of it would destroy the system as the removal of the keystone brings an arch down in ruin. By what path did Zarathushtra reach his great central teaching ? He did not invent a doctrine of immortality. The ancestor spirit was worshipped before his time, and was therefore conceived to be alive. The analogy of Nature had probably already suggested the inference I have just been describing. But Zarathushtra's doctrine was based on neither of these. It was based entirely upon his fervent belief in God. He could not for an instant doubt either God's justice or God's power. He was therefore prepared to learn from God's chosen teacher, Experience, who trains all those whose eyes are open and ears ready to listen and obey. How can it be that suffering and even death so often come to men whose lives are devoted to the doing of God's will, while violent and unclean and untruthful men so often profit by their evil-doing and live in ease and peace to old age ? If God is just and almighty, there *must* be some day, somewhere, some redress of all this wrong.

This tremendous problem. " Why do the righteous suffer ? " has perplexed all serious minds in all ages, and men are still busy with it.

Some thinkers, with a fine air of superiority, would have us rise above it. Virtue is its own reward : the soul-satisfaction it brings is all the heaven we need look for. Sin is its own punishment : the emptiness of the sinner's ill-gotten pleasures, the remorse attending his crimes, are the retribution that takes the place of a theological hell. The theory does not work. It is only the imperfectly bad man who is really unhappy; he who has long stifled conscience, and accustomed himself to gratify every selfish desire without a thought of others, is punished by no avenging angel in this life, and when he dies he only passes into dreamless sleep like the good man he has wronged. The justice of God is hopelessly compromised by such a theory. If God is not just, it is a cruel mockery to preach to us His power. If He is not almighty, if Ahriman cannot merely delay but actually snatch from Him the ultimate triumph, theism loses all adequate motive. We may indulge our speculation, build up our systems to explain creation, enthrone our Ahura Mazdah, Indra, Zeus or Jehovah as the Most High God ; but it really does not matter whether we believe in Him. A perfectly just and good God, who is secure of victory over evil in the end, is the only God whose worship carries any hope and blessing for men. Without this belief the Universe may be fearfully and wonderfully made, but it is only a colossal mistake, a thing which had better not have been. We may as well yield at once to those who tell us that blind Chance made all things as we see them.

Zarathushtra never parleys with any such doubts of God. He does not tell us how he knows that God is good and that God must win. How could he ? Such truth comes by intuition, and logic can never establish it. That the human mind in its highest developments turns instinctively to that faith, as the needle to the pole, is one of the justifications of a confidence which dwells necessarily outside regions where formal demonstration is possible.

Not only was Zarathushtra convinced that the Right would triumph, but his clear vision of that triumph overleaped the the ages of delay, and saw

it actually impending. As in the case of the apostles of Jesus, this was only an instance of the perspective which affects all human vision of the future. We see on the horizon, dimmed by mist, what looks like a single line of hilltops; but one is fifty miles away, and another which cuts it is only five. The consideration is of great importance because it affects the whole nature of Prophecy. It is merely idle curiosity which seeks to break through the restriction set on all human thinking and penetrate the secrets of the future. It is only rarely that a knowledge of what is going to happen even within a short period can do us any real good. All the laws of conduct are framed upon the basis of ignorance as to the future. Only general principles are given us, and even a Prophet's vision of the future is by insight, and to a very small extent by foresight properly so called. We can understand therefore why God has given to a few men of supreme spiritual genius the power to see so deeply into the nature of things that they can see how the course of events will work out even after they are gone. But to frame a detailed and chronological picture of the future is not permitted to man, just because it would not serve to advance the one great purpose of life. If Zarathushtra then in his eager enthusiasm looked for the speedy emergence of "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (Asha), he was mistaken only in the time, which Jesus expressly tells us cannot be known by man as man. The supreme principle which gives him the general truth remains unaltered.

The disappointment of the hope of an immediate Renovation had a deeply interesting consequence in the later development of a term very conspicuous in Zosoastrianism, *Saoshyant*, or "one who will deliver." For Zarathushtra it meant himself and his most active helpers in his evangelising work. To them was coming the greatest joy that can ever fill a human heart, the joy of doing good, and at last the joy of seeing the pleasure of the Lord prosper in their hand, the full and glorious purpose of God fulfil itself in their ministry. But it was not to be. Zarathushtra is not the only great Prophet who hoped to see glorious visions realised in his own lifetime and then died without the sight. We catch wistful

phrases here and there in which he expresses his longing for an earnest of the blessings that were to come. He never loses his confidence that they were coming, but he seems to betray a little doubt whether it would be in the time of his earthly life. Three thousand years have passed since Zarathushtra dreamed his great dream of a world renewed in righteousness; and the scoffer may say, as he did when the apostles of Christ had long passed away and their visions were still unrealised, "Where is the promise? For since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they have been from the beginning of the creation." It does not invalidate the promise that we have to wait for it so long. God thinks in millennia where we think in days, and His plan for His world is infinitely vaster than we can ever realise. Zarathushtra was not destined to see the completion of the colossal world-scheme the outlines of which he drew. But it was a true instinct which in later Parsi doctrine made the still future Soashyants sons of the Prophet, and thus symbolised his true connexion with the future he foretold. Do you ask me whether that prophecy was ever fulfilled? I think you know my answer, an answer which expresses more glowingly my enthusiasm for your ancient faith than any eloquent eulogy I could possibly compose. It was fulfilled when your own Mobeds, guided by some heaven-sent dream to recognise in a wondrous new star the Fravashi of Soashyant newly born, came to Bethlehem with their gold and frankincense and myrrh.

From these visions of the world's future I turn awhile to the individual. What was Zarathushtra's conception of Retribution, of the fate that tardily but inevitably overtakes the sinner who has defied Righteousness to the end and followed the Lie? There are just three possibilities which our minds can conceive. The wicked may be kept under punishment to all eternity. They may be annihilated, either at death or after an interval of punishment. They may be remedially punished, and ultimately purged from evil and restored to God's good creation. Although these alternatives are the only ones that human thought can frame, not one of them can satisfy our own conception of what is ideally just. Insoluble difficulties assail us as soon as we try to work out any one of

the three. It is best to acknowledge our helplessness, and take refuge in what has been well called "reverent agnosticism." The Judge of all the earth will do right, and it is only a small part of His action that we can ever hope to understand. Only He knows the relative extent of good and evil in any human life, the degree of blame where a sinner may be more sinned against than sinning, the allowance that must be made for heredity and environment, and the consequent possibility that a failure in this life may be redeemed in another. To solve these problems is not the function of Revelation. Those to whom it comes are to learn what is God's will for them, and how they may accomplish it, not the precise nature of the penalty that will follow their rebellion. Human codes of law may warn the dacoit of the sentence he may expect if caught. But that is not the way of a father, even among men.

If this is true, we may expect the voice of Prophecy to be symbolic rather than logical. If the prophet is thinking of the heinousness and inexcusableness of wilful and open-eyed rebellion, his language about its punishment in the Hereafter will not deal in mitigations: no limit will be set upon the severity or the duration of the vengeance that is the expression of Divine Justice at last triumphant. But if the mind is picturing the Kingdom of God in all the splendour of its ultimate victory, language may well be used which allows no exception to the universal law: God's love shall not retire defeated from its pursuit of the blind, rebellious soul, but with the "majestic instancy" of which Francis Thompson sings, will overtake its object even in the distant gloom of the Unknown. Later Zoroastrianism is rather disposed towards the second attitude, while Zarathushtra shows nothing but the first. His burning wrath against intolerable wrong, against the callous cruelty and self-chosen blindness of men who refused his gospel and murdered his faithful people, burned too strongly for him to see any deliverance from the house of the Lie.

There is one very interesting addition which Zarathushtra makes to his simple alternative of Heaven and Hell. At least once, probably

twice, he refers to the case where in the weighing of merit and demerit the scales hang in equipoise. He does not hint what is the future reserved for such cases, though it is safe to assume that in his oral teaching he was more explicit than in the highly concentrated Hymns. There is no proof that Hamistakan as later portrayed would have answered at all closely to the Prophet's lines of thought. To me it seems much too mechanical and systematic: its sign manual looks more like the priestly Magian's hand. The interest of the allusion lies in the fact that the Prophet recognised the existence of the great middle class in religion, the people who are neither very good nor very bad, but very mixed, as so many of us are. We have, it may be, lost but little through not knowing what Zarathushtra conceived as fit destiny for those who had not enough merit to win Heaven, but just enough to escape Hell. I very much doubt whether he formulated it at all: his acute spiritual sense told him how impossible it is in all these problems of Retribution to do more than recognise an insoluble difficulty and leave it trustfully to the wisdom and love of God.

As little, we may safely assume, did Zarathushtra speculate on the character of punishments awarded in Hell. It was a subject dear to the Middle Ages, in your world and mine alike. The grim visions of Arda-i-Viraf are fairly matched on the Christian side by a weird document lately recovered, calling itself the Apocalypse of Peter. And centuries later the subject was taken up by one of the half-dozen supreme poets of all the world's literature, and the mighty imagination of Dante strove to paint the issues in eternity of rebellion against God's Will here. About the poetical splendour of all this there can of course be no question. But its religious value is to-day a thing of the past. A professing Christian may read Dante's *Inferno* and be as little moved in his conscience as a nominal Parsi by Arda-i-Viraf. It is hard enough to-day to persuade men to bring the thought of Future Retribution into their practical life at all. "The modern man is not thinking of his sins," we were told a few years since on high authority. Perhaps the appalling discipline of the War may bring him to realise that in that

deficient sense of his Sin lay the folly which the whole world is expiating today. India, so far as I can see, is hardly thinking of Sin at all. It is futile to use the word when retribution is supposed to be earned by eating with a man of another cast, and giving a hand of mercy and help to an "untouchable." You inherit an incomparably higher ideal. But even you—if you will allow me to speak very frankly—are not outside the peril of debasing the moral currency in this great matter. There are multitudes of "Sins" in your Parsi law which have nothing to do with ethics. It is, for instance, an inexpiable sin to defile the sacred fire by committing a corpse to it. And yet you do not apparently regard cremation as sinful when practised by a Christian or a Hindu : nay, you could not even get a Fire for an Atesh Behram without the contribution of fire from a cremation. I would not for a moment urge you to outrage your conscience by doing what you think heinous, however differently it may appeal to me. Paul tells me that when a man believes a thing to be unclean, it is unclean for him, however neutral it may be in itself. But I may urge you to keep a right perspective in these things. Do not exalt the heinousness of ritual offences, and have no emotion of horror left for things that outrage the conscience of every right-minded man. Keep your freshest energies, your most fervent and passionate indignation, for wrongs against your brother man—for injustice and fraud and oppression, for violence and lust and bloodshed, for selfishness and greed and lying. To put it in a word, observe the code of the Vendidad according as it is binding on your conscience, but never let the Vendidad obscure the Gathas. And that is for you the special putting of a Divine appeal that comes in its varying forms to men of all religions. It is so much easier to obey an external or ritual precept than one that goes down into the heart. Religious men everywhere—Parsi, Christian, Hindu, Moslem, Buddhist, and all the rest—are found to be mightily concerned about the minute details of ritual worship, desperately distressed if something has been omitted, some unconscious pollution contracted. And all the time the most inspired voices of their own prophets, the deepest instincts of their own consciences, acknowledge the eternal truth of the Hebrew seer's

word, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

The neglect of these great commandments is essentially what we should call Sin. It is anti-social action, the preference of our own selfish aims to the service of the general good. If that is Sin, clearly the world's happiness depends on the conquest of sin far more than on any other condition. Read the Gathas carefully, and you will find that Zarathushtra pays little attention to any other kind of Sin. It is against wrong done to man that he thunders, as the evil which God will most surely punish. He does not tell us in detail how God's punishment will fall. But in a few intensely vivid symbols he helps us to realise Retribution. He speaks of "Misery, darkness, foul food, and crying of Woe." He declares that the sinner's own Self will torment him: remorse, awakened when too late, will be the sharpest punishment of the man who tried to gain the world and ruined his own soul. As Milton puts it,

> The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.

And, most terrible of all, the rebel must be "to all time guest in the House of the Lie." The Presence of God is heaven, and His Absence hell. He who "loveth and maketh a Lie" here, shall have it for companion in eternity. Can any horror even of Dante's imagining match what these brief words bring?

In sharp contrast to these vague but fearful visions of Retribution come Zarathushtra's bright and confident assurance that it will be well with the good man whether he lives or dies. The House of Song—one thinks of Christina Rossetti's beautiful saying that heaven is "the homeland of music"—the eternal presence of God and of the saints who have overcome, with Zarathushtra at their head, and every form of bliss and peace and light are to be the reward of him who here chooses good thought, word and action. The Gathic doctrine that a man's Self will mould his future life was expanded in the Later Avesta in a form altogether after Zarathushtra's heart. You are not

likely to have forgotten that fragment in which the good man's soul, as it flies away from the body, is met by a lovely damsel borne on the wings of a fragrant south wind, who proves to be his own Self, made lovelier by every good thought, word or deed achieved in earthly life. The old imagery of the Bridge might be kept, but one feels it is only a symbol when the glorious angel Self is seen guiding the soul to His Presence from whom she came.

The picture I have just recalled is no mere poetry, no rhapsody to delight our fancy. Its infinite value lies in its direct and practical bearing on our conduct to-day. Our actions might be prompted by hypocritical love of praise. Our words are sometimes dictated by pretence. But when thoughts likewise must be good, and thoughts are moulding the Self that is to bring us to the "Best Existence," we realise that a very drastic amendment of our whole lives is imperative. Nothing but a heart altogether devoted to Asha will fashion for us the fair angel who can lead us to God's Home. And that means an unselfish heart, one set not only on personal well-being, but on that of others. Hence by the true doctrine the man who is set on winning heaven must be working heart and soul for the Regeneration of the World. He must help forward the Desired Kingdom, fight for God against evil in himself and in the world, covet whatsoever things are lovely and just and pure. Thus protected with the armour of unselfishness and devotion, the good man looks for the ultimate triumph of the Right, because he believes in God.

For Right is Right, since God is God,
And Right the day must win;
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin.

RELIGION, RITUAL AND CONDUCT.

I come in this concluding address to apply what I have said of Zarthushra's teaching to the practice of Religion to-day. We have tried to examine together the Prophet's thought upon the deepest problems of life. We have asked what he has to tell us about our relation to God and to one another. We have tried to lift a corner of the veil that hides the Future, to see how our ultimate destiny illuminates present duty. But we have heard no word of things which to-day cover by far the largest part of the world of Religion, as normally understood. Priests—ceremonial worship—repetition of sacred formulæ—use of sacred substances—avoidance of things that bring pollution—where are they? The word *priest* (*zaotar*) occurs once in the Gathas, the other subjects never occur. The Gathas themselves came to be used as *Manthra*, but with no direction from their author. External and ceremonial religion is conspicuous by its absence in the extant teaching of your Founder. How is it that to-day it bulks far larger than the subjects I have been busy with throughout these addresses, on which Zarathushtra had so much to say? Clearly I could not close these addresses without a word on that aspect of Religion which is so much more patent to the eye than any other. Does the Prophet's silence about it mean that a faithful Zoroastrian should ignore it? Has external religion a place, and if so what is it? The answer to that question is obviously vital, for if the simplest and easiest answer is true, then the most religious among you are absolutely wasting a large proportion of your time, which might be more profitably spent, according to the judgment of Zarathushtra himself.

Throughout these addresses I have taken the liberty to illustrate your religion freely from my own. They are the only present-day religions which can be usefully compared. In all others, while good and valuable religious doctrines may be gladly recognised, you and I alike cannot fail to see error largely mingled with truth, and error which has grievous

effects upon ideals of conduct. Only in the Gathas, in all Gentile prophecy as I know it, Jesus could have recognised a foundation from which no rubbish had to be cleared before building the mighty superstructure. Since the development of Christianity can be shown to be entirely independent of Zoroastrianism, unless in a few superficial trifles, it is natural that the experience of the one religion should be called in at sundry points to illustrate the life of the other.

I proceed accordingly to sketch in broad outlines the development of external religion in Christianity, in order to see whether the parallel will help us to answer the question formulated above for your religion. In the teaching of Jesus there is as little about ceremonial as there is in the Gathas. He hardly ever talked about the Temple sacrifices which took so large a place in the religion of the Jews. He never discountenanced them, and there are hints here and there that he urged those who worshipped in the ancestral way to throw their whole soul into it. Fasting, for instance, as spontaneous a practice with the Oriental as it is foreign to the West, he never prescribed—though later copyists foisted it into his words—but he insisted that his disciples when they fasted should make it a genuine and unostentatious observance, and not only a means of acquiring a reputation for piety. And even of so solemn an act as the presentation of a sacrifice before the altar, he said that there was something much more urgent, the making up of a quarrel between the offerer and his brother. No wonder that sacrifice quietly dropped out of his followers' system : it had fulfilled its purpose and become out-worn. Apart from prayer, which as he taught it was no part of external religion at all, but a simple and spontaneous out-pouring of the heart to God, he left no directions concerning worship. God expects no precise and elaborate rules to stiffen our communion with Him : we may as well force a set speech and gesture upon the little child sitting on his father's knee ! He to whom our thoughts speak far more loudly than our words assuredly cares nothing for that in which the heart is not concerned. Jesus only left behind him two exceedingly simple rites, acted parables by which he reminded us that our souls need cleansing as well as our bodies, and

that they equally need food to sustain life. So he took over from John, his forerunner, the symbolical bath, and told his disciples always to take their food and drink in remembrance of himself, the true food and drink of the soul.

Such an attitude towards the externals of religion manifestly emancipated the followers of Jesus from any bondage to ritual, to sacrifice, to forms of prayer. Intercourse with the Heavenly Father whom their Master had revealed to them could only be free as air, and as joyous as it was reverent. In the exquisite words of the Quaker poet,

Our Friend, our Brother, and our Lord,
What may thy service be?
Nor name, nor form, nor ritual word,
But simply following thee.
We bring no ghastly holocaust,
We pile no graven stone;
He serves thee best who loveth most
His brothers and thy own.
Thy litanies, sweet offices
Of love and gratitude;
Thy sacramental liturgies,
The joy of doing good.

And Whittier in the nineteenth century only said in poetry what James the brother of Jesus said in prose long ago: "Pure worship and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

But this is not the end of the matter. This very James who seemed to have no room for any ceremonial religion was the man who according to early tradition, supported by a significant incident in the "Acts of the Apostles," was conspicuous even among Jews for the regularity of his attendance in the Temple and his love for the old ritual in which he had been brought up. He knew it was no longer necessary, that Jesus had taught a higher way and a better access to God. But he found the Temple

service helped him, and that was reason enough for his continuing to worship there : other people who were not helped by it might please themselves.

This has been the history of Christian worship in all the ages since. On one side worship has developed and been elaborated till no service in any religion could surpass it for splendour and for complication. You know the worship of the Roman form of Christianity. It depends on magnificent buildings, splendid music, gorgeous priestly garments, ritual words in a dead language repeated with minute accuracy. You would see and hear nothing of the kind if I took you to worship with me in Colaba Wesleyan Church. Simple extempore prayers in English, the reading of Scripture in English, English hymns and an English address interpreting and enforcing some passage from the Bible—that is the kind of worship that helps me. And yet if I had the power by lifting a finger to stop the utterly different worship in a Roman or Anglican Church, I would never dream of doing so. I recognise that my brother Christian finds God's presence in an ornate ceremonial, and in a "Mass" the very idea of which I find more difficult to understand than anything in Parsi religion. I find that Presence in a very different way. It is all a matter of temperament, and the only thing that matters is that we should get near to God and hear His voice. If a ritual, or the absence of a ritual, achieves this for us, it has justified itself sufficiently.

Now I think while I have been thus talking of the wide differences in this matter within the Christian Church, you have been already applying the parallel of which I have been thinking throughout. Like ourselves, you began with hardly any ritual at all. It is always so with Prophets : they are never prone to bind the free communion of men with God in fetters imposed by priests. Priests have their place, but the dangerous thing about them is that they are always so much inclined to take too large a part in religion. I do not wish to set them aside as useless, although in my own form of Christianity we have no priests at all and have no room for them. If my friend of another temperament finds the priest's ministrations helpful, I should wish him to have them.

If I were on the battlefield, and a dying Irish soldier implored me to get him a priest to administer the last sacraments, do you suppose I should stop to argue with him as to the futility of what the priest could do for him? Zarathushtra speaks once only of a priestly act, and I think he means that he performs it as head of a family: that was the oldest and most natural kind of priesthood, and the only one found among the Aryans before their separation. That is all there is in the Gathas about external worship. It seems to follow—does it not?—that sacrifice and ritual and the saying of prayers cannot be so vital as many people think. Else how could this great Prophet say a hundredh part as much about religion as he does in the Gathas without alluding to a duty so supremely important?

What am I coming to? I seem to hear some zealous reformer say, "Well, it is quite obvious that the speaker agrees with me that we Parsis ought to make a clean sweep of all the worn-out rubbish that we are still hoarding. No more seven-hour-long ceremonials, conducted in language that the Mobed himself does not understand. No more of that disgusting *gomez*. No more repetition of Gathas, which are at best very doubtful of meaning, and which the great majority of us do not understand at all. Zarthushtra knew nothing of these rituals—why should we try to be more pious than he? Surely Ahura Mazdah cares nothing for these endless details of ritual! He is far too great to trouble about such niggling absurdities; and it is insulting God to act as if He knew no language but Gathic. Let us have done with all this nonsense, and take to rational religion, worthy of this enlightened age!"

Wait a little, my good friend: I have two or three very important questions to put to you. And firstly for yourself. You are taking a thoroughgoing iconoclastic attitude, in the name of Zarthushtra. But most assuredly your Prophet would want to know of you what you put in the place of all that you sweep away. If you profess to follow Zarathushtra, you should follow him on the positive side as well as the negative. You can hardly question the assertion that the Gathas are

full of prayer to God and passionate belief in God. If the prayer-words of the Gathas are too difficult and obscure for you, or lie outside your understanding altogether, are you trying to observe their spirit by offering prayers of your own which breathe the same passionate earnestness and the same serene faith? You claim to be a Reformer. So do I: I am an enthusiastic son of what in Christian History is called the Reformation. But remember that with us the Reformation was not the mere cutting down of hoary error. It was the bursting forth of long repressed life. Every true reform lives by what it sets up, not by what it breaks down. Have you a great and worthy substitute ready for all the outworn rubbish that you wish to throw into the bonfire? If you have not, I warn you in the name of all history that your "reform" will accomplish nothing, however justified you may be in your zeal against things which Zarathushtra never knew and of which you are sure he would never have approved.

But you reply, "Yes, I am a constructive Reformer. I want to abolish all this formalism because I have something better to offer. I would have my fellow Parsis pray from the heart in words that express their own needs, and not in ancient formulæ which at best express the views of others as to what they ought to need. I would abolish barren ceremonies in order to set energies free for loving service of God and man, I would have the Parsi enter the true succession of our Founder, and strive with passion like his to uplift the world in righteousness, to banish error by the attractiveness of truth."

Here of course is an ideal which as a Christian I naturally approve with all my heart. But although the ceremonies you would abolish have no sort of religious value for an outsider like me, and can never rouse one thrill of enthusiasm such as Zarathushtra's own doctrine compels, I doubt if instant and complete destruction is the best road to your ideal. Remember that what you seek is incomparably harder than what you have in possession. It is infinitely easier to say a prayer in a long extinct language than to pray a real prayer in English or Gujarati. It is very easy to attend a ceremony, even a very long one, but very hard

to keep oneself unspotted from the world. It is easy to wash the hands, tremendously difficult to clean the heart. Now you have yourself easily leaped to the momentous decision that you have no use for obsolete ceremonial and prayers in a language you do not know. But thousands of Parsis have as yet never entered on your road. If by your reforming energy all these ceremonies were finally abandoned, would not a great many Parsis lose what is for them a genuine help towards communion with God? It is only very few people, in the Christian or the Parsi community, who can find their way to God without some external help. The immemorial associations of a form of worship may help some who never could get what is needed by spiritual contemplation unaided by something objective and external. Beware therefore lest you administer a rude shock to simple souls by bringing too suddenly to them the suggestion that there is no merit in that which generations of their forefathers trusted implicitly. You may undermine their faith and make them take refuge, not in your own fervent idealism, but in a dreary general denial. And then the last state of such men is infinitely worse than the first. So keep prejudice at bay, and strive to supplant the inferior or harmful elements in a religion by bringing in the higher truth and the more fruitful practice to win its way by its own inherent value. "When the moon shone, we did not see the candle." As a deeply interested outsider, I am eager for reform in your community as in my own. But I would have it always come in Zarathushtra's own way, the way of addition, not that of mere demolition, the bringing in of truth so attractive and persuasive that it will drive away insensibly all that is futile or harmful, so that sensitive souls may not be shocked but strengthened, not driven but led.

And now may I have a word with the orthodox? I hope I have sufficiently indicated that I am not pleading for the destruction of your ceremonies, for the abolition of your Gathic prayers. I am only concerned about the motive with which you continue these religious practices. But there are certain lessons of experience which come from all religions alike, and especially from those which make large use of liturgy and ceremonial. It is always found that a considerable proportion of the community slip into the easy path of saying liturgies and performing

ceremonial, and letting this represent the whole of religion for them. It is exceedingly natural. Here are religious duties the necessity and importance of which are earnestly urged by responsible teachers. How easy to infer in practice that they are really the thing that God requires beyond all others! It has always been so. Look at the Jews in the time of Christ—so busy "tithing mint and anise and cummin," laying down elaborate rules as to the keeping of the Sabbath, and all the rest of their tiresome ritual which it took a man his whole time merely to remember! So busy that they forgot "the weightier matters of the Law, justice and mercy and faith"! How tremendous was the rebuke those very religious people received from Jesus! But it was not for observing their ceremonial. They were persuaded that all this was duty, and Jesus never interfered with such a conviction. "This ought ye to have done," he said, "and not to leave the other undone."

Am I not right in believing that a great many Parsis are in the same condition as those Jews? In one very important respect you are in more danger than they. For they always took care to interpret their Hebrew Scriptures in the language of daily life, although a very large proportion understood the Hebrew, which was not separated by any great difference from the Aramaic vernacular. With you it is very different. Those of you who understand the Gathic—which became an extinct language nearly three thousand years ago—are in a small minority. I shall have something to say presently about prayers in a dead language. Just now I only want to point out what a powerful temptation there is in the use of the best of liturgies in a language the worshipper does not understand. Let him once get the idea that the words have a magic in themselves, and he is in danger of repeating them mechanically, with his mind wandering to all sorts of subjects while he is supposed to be in communion with God. Wandering thoughts during prayer are so very, very easy. I am not talking down to you from some superior heights: I know too well the difficulty of concentration even for one who like myself never prays except in English and hardly ever uses a set form except the Lord's Prayer. You will feel with

me surely that prayer can never be beneficial to us unless we are consciously and intelligently in contact with God. Without for a moment denying that such contact can be maintained even by the use of prayers which are intelligible to the worshipper, I want at present to urge that the lack of understanding constitutes a very serious difficulty, and demands accordingly an effort of the soul which most certainly a vast number of seemingly pious worshippers never think of putting forth. And if you get into the habit of merely formal worship, you might just as well get a gramophone to do it for you: if the virtue of worship lies merely in the production of magical sounds, the gramophone will do it much better! The degenerate Buddhist's praying-wheel is justified after all!

Not only is this danger one that affects you all as individuals: it vitally concerns the whole future of the Parsi religion. The degeneration of a great religion always goes along these familiar lines. First comes the Prophet, with a message straight from God. He infects his disciples with his own enthusiasm. There are no forms, no rigid organisation: everything is as fresh and natural and full of life as when the flowers burst into beauty after the rains. Then the first believers pass away, the new impulse is no longer a novelty, the effort gradually slackens down. And true religion is always an effort. Religion is a constant rowing up stream towards the source of a rapid river: let the rower rest on his oars, and his boat loses in a minute what took him an hour to gain. What is left when this first Golden Age has passed? Reverence for the Founder, certainly sometimes taking forms which would have filled him with horror. Orthodoxy in plenty, new dogmas for which the new community is ready to fight to the death. Ceremonial, yes, enough to occupy all the time the people can spare for religion. But *life*—ah! that is vanished or vanishing. Sixty years after Jesus passed out of human sight, there was a Christian church in Asia Minor, in a proud and wealthy manufacturing city, very much like a smaller Bombay. Once they had been like the boiling spring that spurts up from the earth six miles away from their city, rich in healing virtues. Now the prophet who

speaks to them in Christ's name compares them to the same water when it has run away over the open country for a mile or two, and falls in a nauseous lukewarm cascade right opposite their town. "I would thou wert cold, or hot," he cries. Better lose all religion than keep just enough to send us to sleep, enough to drug our consciences and make us think all is well. There is a railway engine standing still with its heavy load at the foot of a steep ghât. You try the water in the boiler, and find it almost hot enough to scald your hand. What is the use of that? It must boil, and keep boiling, if that train is ever to climb the hill. And Religion is an engine that is to pull the human race up the steepest and hardest of hills, up to the City of God which shines far away in its beauty and its peace. If the engine fires are dying and the steam has ceased to rush through the pipes, it is a sheer mockery: the passengers had better get out and walk—they will get there sooner that way!

Shall I tell you what I long and pray for, to come to the Parsi community that I love so well? I want for you the best of gifts, a real and splendid revival of religion. I would see your whole body pulsating with new and vigorous life, the great days of Zarathushtra back again in the twentieth century—modern knowledge and modern civilization, but a passion for the uplift of the world in the grace of Ahura Mazdah like that which made your Prophet count life and comfort cheap if only he could convert men to his gospel. I care nothing about mere admission to a privileged community—you can settle such a matter for yourselves, and I shall not dream of advising you. But I do long to see the Parsi faith what it was ages ago, a power to destroy all form of evil and set up righteousness and loving-kindness and purity in the earth. You know how I myself believe such a mighty revival can come to you, by your welcoming your own Soashyant, who is also our Saviour, and without disowning Zarathushtra—nay, by believing his great doctrines as never before—accepting that which crowns your faith with new and living power. But if you are not yet prepared to call him Lord and lay your treasure once more at his feet, at least listen to Zarathushtra, your own Prophet. Learn to be passionate like him for God's Kingdom and God's Righteousness.

Put first things first, and pray and work as those who live like him in the Presence of God. And India will look on amazed, and catch new life from that which thrills in you.

There is just one more question to be asked. What will the position of your ceremonies be when you experience that revival of true religion for the coming of which I pray to God the Only Wise, your God and ours? One part of the answer is clear enough, that the question will have a very secondary importance then. When every Parsi is only thinking how the Desired Kingdom is to be brought near, he will realize that God Himself desires that Kingdom of Righteousness infinitely more than punctilious attention to details in the manner of approaching Him. Earthly Courts are immensely concerned with questions of etiquette, which no doubt help to create the artificial atmosphere that fosters due respect for kingship. And yet the King-Emperor himself wins a great deal more loyalty by chatting in friendly style in a Lancashire weaver's cottage, or by a kind word in Hindustani addressed to an Indian boy in my own old school in England, than by all the Court ceremony ever devised. We must believe, even from the limited analogies of human life, that Love is the only etiquette of Heaven, and sincerity, reverence and faith the only conditions demanded of those who would reach the Wise Lord's throne. If this is true, we should still see worshippers divided broadly into two classes, in a world where heart-worship and practical service have come to their right place. One class—to describe them as they would be seen in the Parsi community—would still love to worship before the sacred symbol of the fire-altar, reciting words of prayer and praise hallowed by the associations of ages, together with the special petitions and thanksgivings that spring spontaneously from a heart full of the gifts of the Most High. The other, less affected by old associations, more influenced by reason than emotion—both necessary elements, and distributed among us in very varying proportions—, would discard all but informal prayer, offered in no special holy place, and clothed in any words that rise most naturally to the lips when the soul is most conscious of the Divine nearness. The difference is one of temperament alone, and neither class should view the other with intolerance or suspicion. And if we would kill the roots of

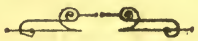
bitterness that poison the relations of sincere and earnest men now, is there not one clear way to such a goal? Let us make our worship overwhelmingly real and serious, so that all may know that it is no mere form, whether it be in English, in Gujarati, in Gathic, or in any other tongue. When that is realized, we shall all feel that we are only concerned with our own form, that it may be the best we can find for our own need. Whatever brings us to God, and helps us best to speak with Him, justifies itself at the only bar we need care about, that of our own conscience: what business is it of anybody else to judge me in a matter between myself and God alone?

I have given you an abundantly sufficient justification for using your Gathic prayers, assuming that you know at least generally what they mean. May I entreat you to have done with spurious justifications which are only too likely to discredit religion with thoughtful people, and degrade its high conceptions? I can quite understand a devout Parsi's repeating *Ashem Vohu*, even with a very vague idea of its meaning, and getting a real spiritual uplift from its sacred associations. But when we are told that its tones start vibrations in the atmosphere which can destroy things evil, much more harm is done than the mere setting up of a questionable scientific theory. You are dragging down the conception of good and evil, from the spiritual realm into the material. Evil is not merely like a bad smell, which you destroy by disinfectants. The various justifications of ancient Parsi rituals on sanitary and scientific grounds would meet with short shrift from any real scientific authority. They are only theosophic afterthoughts, and mostly on a level with the sort of wisdom which that perverted system provides. But the real evil of this kind of thing lies much deeper. Disinfectant and electric currents, atmospheric vibrations and the rest—all these are real enough in the material world where they have their place assigned them. But the things of the soul are in another world altogether, which we must not soil and degrade by any such association. The confusion is mischievous from both points of view. Only yesterday I heard of a Parsi woman's life being sacrificed to some religious scruple. Let the physician alone determine the treatment

of disease, the conscience alone determine the way to drive sin out of the soul. Your lately established "Good Life League" points the way on which all Parsis, without distinction of party, may develop the usefulness of your historic community, and establish for all to see the true greatness of your Founder's faith.

And now I am at the end of these addresses which I have been so greatly privileged to offer to a people of whom I have thought with warm interest through many years. You will not all agree with all that I have laid before you, but I trust you will all recognize the spirit in which I have tried to speak. May the Wise Lord give you wisdom and purity and truth! May your service to India, great already out of all proportion to your numbers, surpass all its past achievement! And as one of those who have come across the sea with one purpose above all others, to tell the blind and the sorrowful in India in the name of Christ that God is good and God loves them, I pray that you who know already so much of a high and holy truth may learn more and give more, to crown all your past with a greater and more glorious future.

ZARATHUSHTRA.



A Lecture delivered in the Convocation Hall, Bombay University, on Thursday, March 2nd, 1916.

My subject this evening is the external history of one of the greatest men in the religious annals of mankind. Zarathushtra, or Zoroaster, as the Greeks and Romans call him, is one of the earliest in the small band of men whom we call great Prophets ; and his early date is responsible for the obscuration of his story, and even for his falling a prey to the ingenious devices of the mythologist lions, who go about seeking what historical characters they may devour. I shall not be dealing with his thought this evening, unless in passing I may try to sum up his place among the great figures of antiquity. That is not however because I imagine these external things of higher interest than that by which the Prophet of Iran will live in the memory of men. But I have already given in another place a series of addresses, now nearly completed, which are devoted entirely to the teaching of Zarathushtra, and I can therefore ignore it here. Three problems will engage our attention. Firstly, we will ask for the evidence that Zarathushtra is a real historical figure. Secondly, we will try to determine his date. And lastly we may essay the equally vexed question of the scene where he exercised his ministry.

First, then, is Zarathushtra fact or fiction? Some here may be rather impatient of time spent on such a question, and I quite agree with them. We have a horde of learnedly futile persons, mythologists in the West and theosophists in the East, who are prepared to give us elaborate reasons for denying the historical character of pretty nearly everybody who mattered in religious history. There is that very clever gentleman, the Right Hon. J. M. Robertson, M. P., who swept off the page of history Manu (whose name he cannot spell), Lycurgus, Numa,

Moses, Buddha and Jesus, as well as Zarathushtra, who you will see has plenty of company. The method is quite simple. If I may judge from Mr. Robertson's procedure in another case, the argument would be that Zarathushtra and Zeus are clearly the same word, since both begin with *Z*: as Zeus is only a mythical personality, Zarathushtra must go the same way. I suggest the further development of this kind of theme as an entertaining parlour game. I have myself indeed divined and published the argument by which Mr. Robertson's successsors fifty years hence will irrefutably prove him a myth; and if I am not unduly partial to my own creation, I venture to regard it as far superior to those which figure in what Dr. F. C. Conybeare calls his "pre-philological" researches.

In the case of Zarathushtra, however, we have a much more formidable antagonist to dispose of. That prince of Orientalists, James Darmesteter, who translated the Vendidad and the Yashts in *Sacred Books of the East*, developed in the last year of his short and brilliant life a most paradoxical theory. He dismissed Zarathushtra to limbo, and made the Gathas the latest instead of the oldest part of the Avesta, asserting that they showed the influence of the school of Philo, the Alexandrian Jew, who lived in the first century A. D. Only the greatness of its propounder makes the theory worth mentioning, and the fact that it is set forth in so standard a book as the English Vendidad. But it must be remembered that Darmesteter never had the opportunity of reading criticism of his theory, and we can cherish the confident belief that so great a man would have yielded to the unanimity of his fellowstudents.

Let me just mention then some of the reasons why we are in no danger of throwing Zarathushtra's historicity to the wolves. His name alone is a sufficiently hard nut for the mythologists to crack. The second half of it is beyond all question *ushtra* "camel," the Sanskrit *ustra*, which also occurs in the name of his pupil Frashaoshtra. You can easily see the social stratum in which he moved. *Aspa* "horse," Sanskrit *açva* gives us the names of Vīshtāspa, his royal patron, Jāmāspa his disciple and the post-Gathic Pourushaspa, his father. His mother Dughddovā who also happens to be absent from the Hymns—the Prophet is concerned

with religious doctrine and not with family history—is "one who has milked cows." The same useful animal figures in the clan-name Hvogva born by the brothers Frashaoshtra and Jamaspa, and their sister Hvovi, the Prophet's wife. Ishatvastra, "desiring pastures," his son, is not in the Gathas, but is doubtless historical. His disciple Maidyoimāongha, "(born at) mid month," has a name of a different kind, but has the same stamp of reality as the rest. How perfectly ridiculous a task it is to squeeze myths out of such names as these!

Zarathushtra's parents were apparantly the possessors of an "old camel" of which they had become fond. (I have only once myself had half-an hour's intimate acquaintance with a camel, and I cannot say I became fond of him; but longer association may make it possible.) Mythologising invaded his name later on, for it is likely enough that the Greek and Roman *Zoroaster* started his transformation in the East with a new meaning more appropriate for a great prophet. I myself prefer to speak of "Zarathushtra," if only because in this inheritor of an old camel I recognise a real man. I was amused to find in that marvellously learned Oxford book on the Religion of the Ancient Persians, published in 1700 by Thomas Hyde, a solemn comparison of Doghdhova, the mother of the prophet, with the extinct bird the Dodo. I don't know whether the mythologists have fastened on this promising philological evidence. The inference I myself draw is that the idea of Zarathushtra's unhistorical character is by this time "as dead as the Dodo."

Having established this central thesis, we ask whether we know anything more of our hero. The answer is, very little indeed. In one of our Christian Gospels the great prophet John the Baptist is asked by a Jewish deputation "Who art thou?" And his answer is "I am a Voice." Supremely great religious teachers invariably care nothing for personal name and fame. They are wrapped up in their message, and if only men will listen to that they will let themselves and their personal history be consigned to oblivion. We must realise Zarathushtra entirely from the Hymns. Between them and the later Avesta there is a great gulf

of time and place; and most of the stories about him are not even Avestan, but come to us from Pahlavi literature of the Sassanian age. They are to a certain extent based upon lost Avestan literature, but even that assumption does not bring us within some centuries of Zarathushtra's time. I am not one of those who reject a story at once just because it is miraculous. But it is only reasonable that a miraculous story should be able to claim contemporary evidence of an exceptionally good quality, and again that it should have those lofty ethical features and that dignity of character which alone can justify our recognition. A miracle involves the putting into action of a law of nature so rare as to be unrecognised by a system that depends upon frequent recurrence for its establishment. Only the most exceptional conditions call it forth, and only a worthy occasion can make it credible. None of these things can be said of the late and puerile stories that are told of Zarathushtra in the voluminous literature that claims his name for its inspiration. Take for example the "absurd story"—as my friend Professor Williams Jackson calls it—of the miracle which brought Zarathushtra out of prison and converted King Vishtaspa. The King's black horse had its four legs suddenly drawn up to its belly, when the Prophet was imprisoned. He promises to restore the creature, upon the fulfilment of four conditions, one for each leg. Vishtaspa accepts the Faith of the Prophet. Promptly the horse's right fore-leg is straightened out. He promises his son Spentodata as a crusader: the right hind-leg follows suit. Queen Hutaosa is converted. The horse now stands on three legs; and finally the noble animal prances on all four when the plotters against Zarathushtra have been detected and executed. Contrast with this sorry stuff the dignity and elevation of the preaching in the Gathas by which Vishtaspa was won over. The marvel-mongers who thought to enhance the Sage's glory have dragged him down to the level of a mere wizard; and his royal convert loses our respect in about equal measure.

One of these legends does deserve mention because of its literary history. The Roman writer, Pliny the Elder, who perished in the famous eruption of Vesuvius in the year 79 A.D., tells us that Zoroaster was

the only human being to laugh on the day he was born. I have ventured to suggest that there is an allusion to this notion in one of the most celebrated poems of antiquity, the beautiful Fourth Eclogue of Virgil, who bids the wondrous babe of his prophecy speedily greet his mother with a smile—in other words, rival the storied Eastern Sage, as might be expected from a child with whose advent a series of wonders is connected, echoing the poetry of the East.

From stories which, like the apocryphal marvels invented after three or four centuries to embellish the childhood of Jesus, only belittle their hero's fame, we turn back with relief to the dim but never grotesque picture self-painted in the Hymns. No inventor composed those passionate laments over failure and cruel persecution, those homely, lifelike prayers for a tangible and earthly earnest of rewards assured in an after life, those touches of every-day common-place which assure us so delightfully that the great man was made of our clay, and is capable of imitation by ourselves. If ever we find a horse in the posture of a sitting hen, we know very well that we have no magic to cure him, and the Zarathushtra of the fable is useless as an example. But we can all be true like him to the faith that is in us, and strive like him to illuminate the souls of others, at whatever cost to ourselves. The passionate, fiery personality, the abstract and mystical thinker, the strong and practical reformer, the "shepherd of the poor," so fierce in his championing of honest toilers oppressed by cruel marauders—all this we can read for ourselves in a self-revelation of unmistakable truth. It is the combination of metaphysics and common sense which stamps the character with reality. There are not many abstract thinkers who have anything to say about cows and pastures which a farmer can take seriously. Plato pictured an ideal state where the philosopher was king. But then Plato was a philosopher, and his view of the philosopher's capacity for practical statecraft was much too rosy, if we may take the general verdict of mankind. Zarathushtra seems to have been both a metaphysician and a statesman, like Lord Haldane or Mr. Balfour to-day ; and the lofty idealism of a great religious reformer crowned the edifice of a character hardly ever matched in the world's history.

A word might be added as to Zarathushtra's obvious intolerance. Intolerance is often just the obverse of intensity. A man whose whole soul is on fire with conviction, who sees in blinding glory and in darkness that can be felt the two great realms of Right and Wrong, to other men visible only in different shades of grey—such a man is almost inevitably intolerant. And such was Zarathushtra : witness the terrific denunciations he hurls against the *Daevayasna*, the unbelievers who will not accept the truth he brings. Our easygoing modern mind is prone to suggest that Bendva and Grehma and the rest of them may have been men with redeeming features, and the prophet who denounced them a trifle narrow-minded. But that would be quite a misreading. It was their works and not their dogmas that kindled his tremendous wrath. The false teacher was not merely a person who speculated in abstruse subjects and made very serious blunders. The *Daevayasna* King was not a harmless chieftain who had taken the wrong side in theology. No, the Grehma of the Gathas was a prehistoric Treitschke, who supplied the small-scale Huns of Aryan antiquity with a religion basing action on Might instead of Right. The Bendva was a petty Kaiser whose gods were monsters encouraging deeds of blood and lust and cruelty. Intolerance of such, on behalf of peaceful and inoffensive people like the Belgian martyrs of to-day, is a passion the absence of which is evidence of nothing but an imperfect moral sense and an indifference to the sufferings of others. You will find no warrant in the Gathas for that hateful evil, religious intolerance, which produced the " Holy Inquisition " in European history, and perpetually produces in India today deeds of which in a happy future India will be utterly ashamed. Let no one quote Zarathushtra who deprives of property, of liberty, nay even of life, one who in obedience to conscientious conviction has embraced a new religion. To outrage conscience, the voice of God within the soul, is a dark and dreadful crime; and the great missionary who spent his life in striving to win men from error to the Truth he saw, could never have stooped so low as to persecute men who saw Truth otherwise and loyally clung to a conviction dearer than life itself.

There is not much more that we can say of our hero's history and character, apart from his teaching. He really lived—*when* did he live ? The range of opinions here is truly astonishing. I have told you how a very high authority placed his poems in the first century A. D. The traditional date, according to Parsi writings, answers to 660—583 B. C. ; and this epoch is most ably enforced in arguments by Professor Williams Jackson, and accepted by Bishop Casartelli. Professors Geldner and Bartholomae favour a higher date, for which there is some dubious classical evidence. Xanthus of Sardis, a fifth century writer, contemporary with Herodotus, makes him six hundred years anterior to Xerxes—say eleventh century B. C. Unluckily there are MSS of this passage which put on a cipher and so make Xanthus agree with other classical writers who give Zoroaster the highly respectable antiquity of five thousand years before the Trojan War, or eight thousand from our own day. In India, where milliennia are cheap—I heard the Vedas credited with twenty of them by a distinguished Hindu lawyer !—there has been some hankering after a few of these extra thousands. That long-suffering science of astronomy has been called in to support a chronology which would, I am afraid, require us to tear up all our systems of ancient history. It must always be remembered that the phraseology of ancient literature is very rarely exact enough to suit the requirements of the most exact of all the natural sciences. It is not enough to assert that literary allusions will answer well to an eclipse, of a particular stellar configuration depending on precession, or other conditions that our astronomers can calculate to a second for any degree of antiquity. We have to prove that these allusions are absolutely unintelligible without such interpretation, and even then our case is precarious enough. It is well to take warning by the fate of the " astral mythology " school, which in its enthusiasm for all things Babylonian credited that enterprising people with discovering precession ages before Hipparchus, and ages before they themselves understood the cause of the phases of the moon ! (I speak from memory as to this last point, but if it was not this, it was something quite as elementary.)

In this connexion I would remind you that the best authorities are placing the division of the Aryan or Indo-Iranian people as late as the beginning of the second millennium B. C. That of course means that the Veda and the Gathas cannot go behind the middle of that millennium. When therefore the distinguished Parsi scholar, K. R. Cama, cast his vote for 1300 B. C., and others less precisely put the date somewhere between 1000 and 1500 B. C., we may feel that we are about as near the truth as we can hope to come. The traditional date is certainly loo late. It is hard to see how Greek writers could have put back into immemorial antiquity a man who flourished not long before Cyrus. They got their millennia from a misunderstanding of the Magian doctrine about world-ages, and the pre-existence of the Fravashis. But they could not have attached such notions to a historical person who really lived only a few generations before their own time. The very primitive character of the Gathic dialect is a strong argument for keeping Zarathushtra fairly near to the Vedic period : indeed there are some points, in versification especially, wherein the Gathas are earlier in development than the Vedas, and it seems unreasonable to set them much later in date. There is also the necessity of allowing time for development of Later Avestan language and ideas. And the gap we have to leave is not a single but a double one. Before the archaic dialect of the Gathas had gone out of use, a prose Gatha—that known as the " Gatha of seven chapters "—was composed, showing a totally new world of ideas, or rather a fairly complete reversion to the world before Zarathushtra. We have to allow at least two or three generations there, and considerably more between the Gathas and the Yashts. The time allowances calculated on these lines seem to drive us into the second millennium. But there is not a shred of evidence to drive us as far as the middle of that epoch. And when we have put the Sage of Iran as far back as the eleventh or twelfth century before Christ, we have given him the proud place of the earliest religious thinker of the first rank in the Indo-European family ; and we have let him share with Moses the highest antiquity of the prophets of of the whole world.

From time we turn to place. Here again we are assisted by the scientific research of Professor Williams Jackson, in his monumental work, " Zoroaster ". We hesitated in accepting his results as to the date, but on the geographical question there need be no serious difficulty. It is a matter of reconciling a conflict of ancient testimony, traditions that connect Zarathushtra now with Media in Western Iran, and now with Bactria in the East. Professor Jackson's solution is to accept both. We suppose him born in the West, and then after unsuccessful preaching among his own people—a period reflected in the Gathas—wandering eastward until at last he found his royal convert Vishtaspa, and the tide of success began at last to flow. Tradition makes Bactria or Balkh the scene of Vishtaspa's rule. I should prefer to put it rather nearer India, in Seistan.

Now notice that this involves our locating the Prophet's effective work in a region far out of the stream of ordinary history. And this is really the key to the whole problem. It is why Darmesteter was able to collect real facts which his theory attempted, not without plausibility, to explain. Never did a river of thought run more completely underground for ages. It is very much in keeping with the isolation of Zarathushtra, which accounts so completely for the failure of his religion to attain a far larger place in the spiritual history of the world. To maintain the powerful spiritual impulse imparted by a great prophet, it is absolutely necessary that he should be followed by a succession of prophets great enough to understand him and to pass on to a new generation the spirit of the founder. It was not the extraordinary greatness of Moses and Elijah, Isaiah and Jeremiah, that made the religion of Israel what it was. More vital still was the fact that the succession was never broken for a thousand years, that such names as Deborah, Nathan, Hosea and Haggai can be added to the roll, minor prophets, but real prophets, and each capable of adding a contribution wholly in the spirit of the mightier Seers. Still more emphatically has this been true throughout the history of Christianity. Not so has it been with the faith of Zarathushtra. The Magi who embraced it and preserved it rendered a

great service. But they preserved it as a botanist preserves a specimen in a museum, not as a gardener plants the seed and keeps the new species as a living adornment to the parterre. We know of no single prophet in Iran who could be called a kindred spirit with Zarathushtra. Soon after his death, as we see from the "Seven Chapters Gatha," the people were back again in the familiar state in which he had found them. The high abstractness of the Gathas was far above their comprehension. He sang of the attributes of God as a quasi-personal part of his essence. They made these mystic figures into a choir of archangels, differing only in name from the old gods Mithra and Verethraghna. He taught that Evil was a "spirit hostile" to us. They developed "Angra Mainyu" into an arch-demon on lines quite parallel with those to be seen in the demonology of most nations of the world. No wonder the religion of the Gathas, textually preserved by an esoteric priesthood who used the Hymns as *manthras*, failed to penetrate the thought of the great world. It was only unessential fragments of it that ever reached countries that were in the current of world-history. The Gathas themselves happily survived —or some of them—but it was a very distant day that came to understand their spirit, and realise what a treasure of spirituality had been buried for long ages from the sight of men.

It is this geographical remoteness of the scene of Zarathushtra's work which enables us to accept his early date and yet concede to Darmesteter that the history of his influence upon succeeding centuries is irrecoverably lost. The conclusion is forced upon us by the Later Avesta, as well as by the all but complete silence of external history. In the thirteenth Yasht, addressed to the Fravashis, we have a very long list of the saints of the religion. It is remarkable that the names are almost all unknown. They were people of importance in their own day and their own country. But the Farvardin Yasht is their only extant monument. For us they are pathetically unkown, good people who helped good causes in a corner of the world that was far away from fame. I am tempted to use of them the beautiful words of a Christian poet :—

One day, of holy days the crest,
I, though no Churchman, love to keep—
All Saints, the unknown dead that rest
In God's still memory folded deep.

One historical link there is between the times and the lands that we know and the dim age and conjectured country where Zarathushtra's light once burned. We remember the name of Vishtaspa and Hutaosa, the royal pair whose conversion began the long-deferred time of Zarathushtra's success. It is significant surely that these two names figure again in the Achaemenian royal family. Atossa—to use the Greek form—was the daughter of Cyrus, and Hystaspes the father of Darius. I am inclined to combine this fact with the interesting notice preserved in one form of the Inscription of Darius, that Auramazda was the "god of the Aryans." This must surely mean the small aristocratic clan of which the Achaemenians were the most important family. We assume then that the worship of "the Wise Ahura" was hereditary among the "Aryans" in the narrower sense of the word. An inscription discovered by Hommel requires us to infer that the cult of an Ahura (Sanskrit *Asura*) under this lofty title was much older than Zarathushtra. The Prophet then belonged to this "Aryan clan" :—compare the "Arizantoi" whom Herodotus places first among the six Median clans, identified in modern philology with *Ariyazantava*, with meaning just given. In that clan the worship of Ahura Mazdah was maintained, and the names of Vishtaspa and Hutaosa kept in remembrance. Evil in general was known under the name of "the lie" (*Drauga*), and some of the great abstractions which were later known as Amshaspands were remembered at least in name. And, what is more important, the Prophet's triad of Word, Thought and Deed was perpetuated in formulæ of religion. This is all the Zoroastrianism, properly so called, for which we have any evidence in the days of the great Persian kings. There is just a possibility that the special epithet of Evil, which in old Persian apparently took the form *Ahrimanyush*, had been adapted from the Gathic passage that mentions it. But the Gathas themselves were not known or understood except in a small esoteric circle which preserved them as powerful spells.

One important inference follows. If Zarathushtra was one of the "Arizantoi," he could not have been a Magus, as very much later tradition told. In the Gathas there is nothing whatever to suggest that he belonged to a priestly family, or indeed that there were any priestly families in his time. It is really absurd to call in the very natural claim of the Magi, who ages after the Prophet's time assumed that he was one of themselves. I gladly admit that they almost deserved the honour, for the faithfulness and scrupulous accuracy with which they preserved the Gathas ; but I fear that does not constitute a proof! He was an agriculturist, a *Vastryo Fshuyas* ; it is suggestive that this term in the Greek form *Astrampsychos*, figures among the successors of Zoroaster in our oldest Greek authority. It is altogether unprovable, and improbable, that Zarathushtra was among the very rare exceptions to the rule that prophets do not arise from the ranks of the priests, bold and spiritual innovators in religion, from those whose life is devoted to the preservation of ancient rituals and formulæ. Even as Jehovah took David from the flocks and Amos from the orchards, so, I like to think, was Zarathushtra called from the plough, from honest toil whence man wins bread, wherein the true man of God may worship as he turns the fruitful soil, and hold communion with Him not in futile forms but in good words, works and thoughts, in diligence and kindliness and a life unspotted from the world.

THE "ZOROASTRIAN PERIOD" IN INDIAN HISTORY.

The subject of my concluding lecture is one that gives me no little anxiety. I am a Cambridge man, and it is commonly said that a Cantab's most characteristic sentence is "That's not my subject!" We learnt of our Alma Mater a rooted horror of venturing opinions on subjects we had not studied; and I am disposed to think that the most valuable lesson a University can teach. Now the topic which my title describes is one that largely turns on archæology, and starts from some wonderful feats in digging up very ancient historic remains. I know nothing about digging. I might feel encouraged by the conviction that I know as much as Professor Berriedale Keith of Edinburgh, who has felt himself qualified to dismiss in a contemptuous footnote the researches I am about to summarise. Of the criticism to which I have alluded I think it is enough to say that Professor Keith, not for the first time, has shown his great need of some Cambridge teaching.

The romance of Dr. Brainerd Spooner's discoveries at Kumrahar near Patna has peculiar interest for Parsis. No one dreamed that results would follow which could issue in a paper with the title I have given to my lecture. It was therefore without any idea of emphasising the part the Parsi community played in the early history of India that Mr. Ratan Tata offered the munificent donation of Rs. 20,000 a year for the excavation of the site where the great King Açoka had his capital. Mr. Tata's presence with us this evening gives me the welcome opportunity of expressing the congratulations in which we all share. It is not often that such poetic justice is awarded to a generous action. Mr. Tata gave in the interests of pure science, prepared for the possibility that heaps of alluvial soil might be the only outcome of the digger's labour. At most

there was nothing but the palace of a great Buddhist King to be expected. And lo ! the long buried palace when it come to light was such as to suggest that the builder was Açoka's grandfather, Candragupta, and that the plan was to some large extent at least copied from the famous Palace of Darius at Persepolis. More than twenty-two centuries ago, Iran contributed to India men and monuments of which India may well be proud to-day. Mr. Tata's people came to this country as exiles just twelve centuries ago, and we have always assumed that they and their Indian cousins have never met since the Indians left Iran more than two milliennia before those days. Now the spade thus unconsciously directed by a Parsi tells us that the Parsis were only returning to a land in which they had wielded vast influence a thousand years earlier.

I must summarise the general results of the excavations in very brief form, being acutely conscious of my amateurishness even in summary-making upon so unfamiliar a field. The choice of the Superintendent lay with Sir John Marshall, whose archæological work in India makes me proud to claim him as a member of my own College in Cambridge University, the famous foundation of King Henry the Sixth. Sir John's choice fell upon Dr. D. B. Spooner who was able to supplement the qualification of his personal skill and knowledge with the sagacity of his wife, which was destined to supply the suggestion that led the way to triumph.

Dr. Spooner's own account of the excavations, with the far-reaching deductions he has drawn from their data, will be found in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for January and July 1915. These two elaborate papers reveal a most remarkable range of knowledge, and convince the intelligent reader that he is following a man who knows most thoroughly his own subject, and outside that subject knows his limitations with a real scholar's grasp. I can guarantee this by the care with which Dr. Spooner treads what was then the comparatively unfamiliar field of Zoroastrianism, wherein less scholarly amateurs have found many a pitfall for unwary feet. When therefore I find him discussing the rendering of a phrase in

Chinese, which is not a normal element in the equipment of an archæologist, I am predisposed to a trustful acceptance of his results.

The selection for excavation of a field near Kumrahar, a village south of Patna, depended upon discoveries made by Colonel Waddell, who found there certain fragments which he assigned to King Açoka's hand. A month's work, early in 1913, revealed the ground plan of a vast pillared hall. One pillar, found in a leaning position, gave measurements important for the understanding of a series of tubular holes set at intervals of fifteen feet, and filled from above with wood ash, which had followed the pillars as they sank deep down, after a great fire. The ground plan thus recovered suggested to Mrs. Spooner a similar design among the pictures of Persepolis; and it was soon found that the building was apparently a replica in most respects of the famous Throne-room of the great Darius, or at least built in reminiscence of this structure.

Having come so far, Dr. Spooner was tempted farther, and discovered that not only the "Hall of a Hundred Columns" had been reproduced in Pataliputra, but that others also of the Persepolis buildings had been similarly transferred to the new site so far away. Such a fact cannot be disposed of, not even by a pontifical footnote from Professor Keith. And ordinary common sense justified Dr. Spooner in looking for literary evidence that the Mauryan dynasty had Persian connexions in other lines as well.

The recognition of this fact had to a certain extent been established by earlier scholars. India—how much of it we do not know—was among the provinces in Darius's empire. The Kharoshthî system of writing had been linked with the Aramaic hand employed by clerks in Achæmenian Persia. Those of us who have seen the splendid Lion pillar at Sarnath, Benares, can easily recognise the influence of Persia. And in the field of literature we may hear in Açoka's edicts the clear echo of Darius at Behistun. All this fits in perfectly with the descriptions left us by the

Greek Megasthenes of Candragupta's Court. And it suits also the independent observation of Sir John Marshall, that the Mauryan caves near Gayâ betray their authors' familiarity with the royal tombs of Persia.

I pass by the acute discussion Dr. Spooner gives us of the date in Chinese writings, and pause a moment on the remarkable evidence he gets from the Mahâbhârata. There we find immense moated palaces the description of which answers strikingly to the palace of Candragupta, assigned to the genius Asura Maya. The Chinese pilgrim supports the popular view that these mighty buildings must have been reared by supernatural aid. Dr. Spooner conjectures that Asura Maya is nothing but an Indian adaptation of Ahura Mazdâh. Despite a shallow objection by Professor Keith, there is no sort of difficulty about the former element. It is a re-formation of an original word such as a Frenchman could make in a large proportion of words that English has borrowed and altered in pronunciation. We should not be astonished if a Frenchman, meeting with our word *judge*, proceeded to turn it back into his own *juge*. In *Maya* there is more difficulty. But *Mazdah* is of course not capable of transliterating into Sanskrit, the old *z* sound having been early lost. Its nearest equivalent would be *j*. The change of *Maja* into *Maya* is not quite simple. The opposite change is common : note the town *Ajudhya* which once was *Ayodhya*, and so on. It is of course the same phonetic development which brought the English *judge* out of Latin *index*. The return journey is not quite so easily accomplished, but there seems some reason to believe that it may have been sounded like our *j*, and if so its use in transliteration is explained.

The functions assigned to the Genius are in any case quite satisfactory. Asura Maya even has a wife Homā, it seems ; and this free adoptation of the great Avestan *yázata* Homa is of exactly the same quality as that which produced Maya himself. Darius and Xerxes were constantly attributing their architectural monuments to the "favour of Auramazda," and foreigners would easily catch up the phrase. They would, moreover, be predisposed as polytheists to account for such a

stupendous pile by bringing in the help of genii—much as legend called in demons as Solomon's helpers in the building of his Temple. As time went on, and the secret of such architecture was lost, the supernatural association would grow in strength. The edifice, as restored for us from the sculptured face of the Tomb of Darius, must have been one of unparalleled splendour. The pillars, which have sunk out of reach into the alluvial soil, supported a great platform which was only the floor of a mighty superstructure, storey upon storey, upheld by caryatids representing (in Darius's palace) subject nations. Of all this splendour the age of the Mahâbhârata preserved memories, when some tremendous conflagration had left the building in ruins. The caryatids became *Râkshasas* upholding the platform, and the divine architect of the whole took his place, a new member of the accommodating Indian pantheon, as a power reflecting in a remarkable manner the characteristics of the Persian Ahuramazda. The dictionary definition of Maya includes his skill in art and magic, his patronage of astronomy, and of the science of war. We need labour no proof that "the great God Auramazda" took these departments of life under his care.

You will realise by this time the strong presumption that the Mauryan dynasty was Persian in origin. That it was foreign to India is strongly suggested by the behaviour of posterity to a memory of which India should have been proud. Is it possible to define more exactly the history of these greatest of the early kings of the North? Their name, under Dr. Spooner's skilful guidance, affords us a very interesting hint. *Maurya* is a word hitherto unxplained: the invention of a Cudra lady named Murâ to be Candragupta's mother is not very likely to satisfy serious investigators. To an Indian scholar, Mr. K. P. Jayaswal, belongs the credit of tracing a Persian etymology, when Dr. Spooner's discoveries had made such an origin probable. The Avestan name *Möurva*, appearing in more primitive shape in the old Persian *Margu*, supplies an exceedingly plausible original. We need not connect it with the ancient town of Merv, to which the name specially belongs. For the plain on which Persepolis stands is called *Mervdasht*, and the river that runs

through it is the *Murghâb*, which flows near the ancient Pasargadæ, seat of Cyrus and Cambyses. This gives us exactly what we want. Candragupta becomes an Indo-Persian who gets an inspiration from Alexander's Indian triumphs, and sets out to occupy permanently what Alexander had so easily overrun. His family, Dr. Spooner suggests, may have been descendants of the satraps whom Darius set over his Indian Satrapy.

You will be careful not to assume that I am professing to offer you all the evidence, or even all the important evidence, that links the great names of Candragupta and Açoka with Persia. Dr. Spooner's own papers are accessible, and I may simply refer you to them, without either repeating or even summarising their case. My task is rather to examine from a different angle the inferences that the brilliant archæologist has drawn, which are far more sensational than even the recognition of Persian features in an important early Indian dynasty. Ancient dynasties count for very little in the general history of the world. How little did the peacocks who sat on thrones realise that some humble peasant whom they could crucify would be remembered when learned specialists are digging for their very names! Candragupta's grandson did indeed make an unconscious bid for the more solid kind of fame. We remember Açoka today as a man of religion, and only think of his royal rank because he used it so earnestly to advance a creed of which India ultimately showed herself unworthy. Açoka, the royal apostle of Buddhism, was Persian in origin. Dr. Spooner, as daring with his pen as with his spade, goes on to claim Iranian origin in prehistoric times for Açoka's prophet, Gautama the Buddha.

"Iranian in race and Zoroastrian in faith" is Dr. Spooner's summary for the Mauryas. At this point I have to part company awhile from the writer of Dr. Spooner's articles, but not, I am glad to say, from Dr. Spooner himself. For since he wrote he has been reading my *Hibbert Lectures*, and I am peculiarly pleased at having made so distinguished a convert on the problem of the Magi.

His discoveries and my own theory of the Magian customs and beliefs, inside the Parsi system and outside it, fit into each other in a way which is highly gratifying to me, and I believe not unwelcome to him. The net result is that we may rather speak of "the Magian Period of Indian History" than of the "Zoroastrian Period". The foreign influence is as Persian as before, and as Parsi. But we must, I fear, almost entirely keep out the mighty name of Zarathushtra, who did not really come to his throne till Sassanian days, as I tried to show last week.

With this preface I may describe some of the Magian characteristics which seem to have found their place in the environment of the Buddha. There are certain traits which mark the Magi in their separate existence: some of them they brought over into Parsi belief and practice when they succeeded in establishing themselves as priests of the Persian religion, while in others they remained singular. Let us not forget that the Magi are expressly declared to have been one of the six tribes or castes in Media, the "Aryans" being another. The word "Aryan" here—*Arizantoi* in the Greek of Herodotus—is probably used in a much narrower sense than that familiar to us. It will denote a small aristocracy, the warlike tribe which brought the Aryan culture as we know it into Iran and into India. The Magi were beyond all question no "Aryans', in this sense. They may have belonged to an indigenous population who had been Aryanised in language by a migration from Europe generations earlier than that to which the Aryan or Indo-Iranian culture belongs. Please observe the important distinction: the Scythians and other barbarous aborigines may have possessed *Kultur*, but I am talking of "culture," which is not always the same thing.

Now by the help of the Greek and Latin writers from the fifth century B. C. and later, we can get a good idea of the Magi as they appeared to contemporary observers during the Achæmenian age and that which followed it. We need go no further than Herodotus to realise that antiquity was quite alive to the difference between the Magi and the Persians. In the time of the Father of History the Magi were already firmly established as priests of the Persian religion, indispensable

for the performance of their sacrifices. But "Magi differ exceedingly from the rest of mankind," says Herodotus ; and he and his successors take care to show that if they were the Persians' priests, they still kept their own usages, which were very different. That will surprise no one who remembers the ways of sacerdotal castes. The Brahman who acts as priest for other castes in India has his own manners and customs which to an outside observer like myself appear at least as remarkable as the special usages of the ancient Magi. The analogy is historically useful, for in both cases we have an indigenous priesthood attaching itself to the worship of Aryan immigrants, modifying it profoundly in the process, and retaining meanwhile its own distinctive cults and customs.

There are two Magian customs which the Greeks noticed as peculiarly characteristic. One was the manner of their funeral rites, identical with that which is familiar in the modern Parsi Towers of Silence. Dr. Spooner tells me there are very significant parallels in places closely in touch with Buddhist origins. It was specially Magian until the Sassanian epoch, and in the earlier days seems to have been outside Persian practice altogether. Herodotus tells us that the Persians covered their corpses with wax and buried them. There is therefore no reason to expect the presence of the Magian usages in Candragupta's or in Açoka's time : if it appeared, we should understand its significance, but its absence means nothing. The other usage, always coupled with this in Greek sources, was that of the next-of-kin marriage, which the Magi fervently preached as possessing extraordinary religious merit. I do not wonder that your own scholars, with Dastur Darab as leader, have tried very hard to clear the Magi of this reproach. I am afraid contemporary testimony is too strong for them. But I see no reason why Parsis should be seriously troubled by the necessity of accepting this evidence! The Avesta is absolutely clear of complicity in the detestable custom.* That the Pahlavi literature contains some fervent

* Bartholomae would trace it in *Yasht* xv. 35, where Hutaosa prays that she may be "dear and loved and well received in the house of King Vishtaspa." It is an extremely strange inference that she had been in that house as a sister before she entered it as a bride! See my *Early Zoroastrianism*, p. 206, f. I am glad to say Dr. L. H. Gray supports my plea for a common-sense view of that passage.

preaching of the doctrine, I have always assumed on the authority of E. W. West: I am not qualified to discuss the point with Parsi scholars who deny it. But granted that West is right, it only becomes more striking that Parsis always refused to adopt the practice, even when advocated by their own priests. After all, it is the prophets and not the priests who must settle what is the genuine possession of a religion. To me at least it seems a very dangerous thing for Parsis to accept as genuine Parsi doctrine all that stands in the Pahlavi literature: it reminds me only too vividly of the consequences of accepting for Christianity all that was written by the medieval "Fathers"!

Now Dr. Spooner shows that in the ancestry of Gautama there is a clear trace of sister-marriage. He quotes a legend of the Cākyas of Kapilavastu, by which the sons of *Ambattha-rājan*, exiled from their father's home in a place where no other wives were to be had, married their sisters, and were praised by their father as *paramasakyāh* "right clever," a bad pun on Ṣākya. Now Ṣākya-muni is a special name of the Buddha, and Dr. Spooner guides us to some very suggestive implications of both parts of this name. Before setting these forth, it is worth while to note that a reference both to sister-marriage and to Parsi funeral rites may be found in the Mahābhārata account of the Siddhas as Dr. Spooner observes: we naturally call to mind that one of the Buddha's names was *Siddhārtha*, and that there is a connexion between the title Siddha and Kapila, whence Kapilavastu, the sage's birth-place, was named.

The "Ṣākya" clan, from which the Buddha sprang, naturally denotes "people connected with the Ṣākas," and originating from Ṣākadvîpa: the former statement is categorically made by the Chinese writer Yen Shi Ku, as Dr. Spooner tells me. In what direction are we to look for this people? A most remarkable passage in the writings of the great Sanskritist Wilson summarises the concluding chapters of the *Bhaviṣyapurâna*, which records the introduction of Sun-worship into

N. W. India by Çāmba the son of Krishna. Çāmba was afflicted with leprosy, and I might add in passing the noteworthy fact that the Persians regarded lepers as having "sinned against the Sun," as Herodotus tells us. Sûrya himself directs Çāmba "to repair to Çākadvîpa, beyond the sea of salt-water, in which region the Magas corresponded with the caste of Brahmans in Jambudvipa or India". Wilson himself drew the conclusion, and supported it by several indications traced in this very Purana, that "these Magas were the fire-worshippers of Persia". Among them are "the use of the *aryanga*, or Parsi girdle", "the prohibition of touching the dead, also of casting a dead dog on the ground". Further, there is "the Maga custom of eating in silence," which Dr. Modi tells me was once a Parsi practice. This last takes us at once to *muni*, the second element in the title Cākyamuni, for that is the special differentia of *muni* and *mauna*. What then does *Câkya* connote? In Greek the Sacæ are normally a Scythian tribe. But excellent reasons are given for interpreting it more generally, as "Iranian" in general. The Scythians were a very typical tribe of the indigenous inhabitants of Iran, Aryan by language, but unconnected in race with the immigrants from Europe to whom we have specially restricted the name. The Magi, whom we have seen to be a tribe found in Media, are linked by many affinities with these Aryanised autochthons; and it may well be that the name *Saka* was originally that of all these people, and only later appropriated by the Scythians, who ranged in their nomadic life far beyond the limits of Iran and naturally carried the general name with them. We are reminded that for the later Greeks—witness a well known passage in the Apostle Paul—"Scythian" was a general term for uncivilised tribes outside the limits of the ordinary world. Our postulated Eastern use is equally general, but antedates the appropriation of the name by the nomads. However that may be, we may reasonably explain the Buddha's title as meaning "Iranian Silentiary." His descent accounts for the first; and his meditations, the conditions of which were suggested by a practice familiar to him as a Magus born, would abundantly justify the latter.

The "Cākadvïpa Brahmans," then, long adopted with other foreign elements into that heterogeneous caste which claims precedence in India, turn out in their origin to be *Magas*, in other words Magi ; and the kingdom of *Magadha* is appropriately named after the powerful race with which Candragupta was so closely linked.

Let us follow out some other characteristics of the Magi as they reveal themselves in the Indian environment.

Most conspicuous of all their features is their adoration of the Sun and of the Fire. It was probably this which enabled them to attach themselves to the religion of Iran proper, and to the name of Zarathushtra. For the old Aryan nature-worship gave a very high place to both, and Zarathushtra used the symbolism freely. The Magi doubtless belonged to a very different religious atmosphere, but there was enough superficial resemblance to make the connexion easy. Now on early Indian coins, which are with tolerable certainty assigned to the Mauryan era, there are found some notable emblems, the Sun, the Bull and the Branch. The first, which is duplicated in a more complex form, is appropriate to the Magas, who in the *Bhavisyapurana* are called expressly *Vacărca* "Sun-worshippers." The second is not distinctive of the Magi, for it is thoroughly Aryan, and characteristic of Mithraism, which has strong Babylonian admixture; but there is no question of its fitting the Magi. The Branch is the simplest form of the modern *barsom*, and is mentioned in this form by the Jewish prophet Ezekiel at an early date. I may refer to *Early Zoroastrianism* for the necessary proofs and amplifications. One curious point on the other side must be mentioned. These punch-marked coins contain another emblem called a *caitya*, which is said to be of Mesopotamian origin and to signify a hill. The Jains still use it, and call it Mount Meru, a name which recalls the title of the Mauryan dynasty. The difficulty is that the Magi had a special antipathy to mountains, declaring that in the Renovation they would all be flattened out: this comes to us on the double authority of Plutarch and the Bundahish. We have here then another trait in which the Persian outweighs the Magian.

That the Magi were closely connected with *magic* is sufficiently proved by th derivation of the name, unless the sacred tribe has been badly libelled. Their fame in magical arts and in the interpretation of dreams is however securely established on other grounds. It is very significant therefore that magic has no place whatever in the Avesta. Here therefore is a further characteristic of the Magi in their separate existence: it was never incorporated in the Parsi system. Now Dr. Spooner shows that Cānakya, Candragupta's powerful minister, put the Atharva-veda in the forefront. And this is especially the Veda of magic. Another great accomplishment of the Magi was astrology. There is a Purana called by the name of Garuda, a fabulous bird who was said to have carried Çāmba on his journey to Çākadvīpā. But the book deals only with sun-worship, astrology, medicine, etc,—all very Magian subjects. Dr. Spooner's identification of Garuda with *Garonmana*, the Parsi paradise, is the only one of his acute equations that does not attract me, and the less so as I am sure Garonmāna has nothing Magian about it: it comes straight from Zarathushtra, and becomes thus quite isolated. But it is really not necessary. The Purāna in question has marked affinity with Magianism, and we find it dealing with astrology and other Magian subjects.

The evidence I have sketched, which is by no means all that Dr. Spooner gives in his two articles, and probably far short of what he has accumulated since they were written, will sufficiently prove that Candragupta and his famous grandson were true Persian kings, who moved in an atmosphere very strongly permeated with Magian influence. To bring in Gautama the Buddha, who flourished two centuries before Candragupta, involves some new inquiries. Have we any right to trace definitely Magian institutions so far back?

I hope in answering this question I shall not be regarded as a prejudiced witness. Dr. Spooner's theory, framed before he knew of my own theories about the Magi, fits in with my reconstruction so beautifully that I cannot help claiming it as an additional weight thrown in my scale. True, Professor Keith will have nothing of either of us. But I

am not sure that he is an Iranian specialist, any more than he is an archæologist; and I find that my friend is as cheerful under the Edinburgh tomahawk as I am myself. My own attempt to isolate the Magi, to which I devoted two long chapters in my Hibbert Lectures, begins at a date comfortably anterior to Gautama. Our early evidence produces the impression that if the Magi were a tribe of the Medes they were very far from being confined to Media. We read of a Rab-Mag, or Archi-Magus,† among Babylonian officers in Jerusalem in B. C. 586. Herodotus makes King Astyages of Media consult "the oneiromancers of the Magi": of course I cannot take this as evidence, when the historian's date is recalled. But when Ezekiel, in a vision dated B. C. 591, speaks of twenty-five men who turned their backs on the Temple and worshipped the Sun towards the east, while they "put the branch to their nose," I cannot but recognise a 'Magian combination: there is possibly another allusion to the *barsom* in Isaiah (xvii 10). These indications—which of course do not amount to demonstration, if a more probable reading of the whole evidence is forthcoming—support and receive support from the new suggestion that a Magian environment was round the home of Gautama. I cannot do better at this point than quote a letter of Dr. Spooner's to myself dated December 23rd 1915):—

> Our only legend regarding the ancestry of the Buddha shows that they practised the Magian rite of sister-marriage (which is further attested by the further account of how their neighbours made of this circumstance a reproach to the Cākyas), and we find the Buddhist system so opposed to some of the fundamental principles of Hinduism as to be a hopeless enigma except in the assumption that these other evidences should be viewed connectedly and interpreted in the manner I suggest. If the Buddha was a Magian in descent, he appears as his followers rightly maintain a unifier and

† Prof Keith is wrong in his suggestion that Semitic scholarship vetoes this: if he had deigned to read p. 188 in my *Early Zoroastrianism* he would have seen reason to discount his *ipse dixit*.

not the separatist we have hitherto assumed. A member of the "domiciled" Iranian or Magian community, at length brought under Hindu influence, he steps forth from this Magian body in the direction of the Hindu world, seeking through the medium of a Indianized Zoroastrianism to unite the two communities into one single whole. On this assumption it is easily intelligible (instead of being paradoxical as heretofore) that he disregarded caste. It is intelligible why he did not use Sanskrit as a sacred tongue, why evidences of solar worship so abound in Buddhism that Senart thought he was himself a solar myth, why Scythian stupas were erected, why the un-Hindu cult of relic-worship flourished, why under the Mauryas the Mithraic cave was for the first time introduced in India and applied to Buddhist usages, having been excavated on a Persian model, why the Buddhist system spread so rapidly, and why it spread in just those regions where it did. The final absorption of the system into Hinduism also becomes quite logical, as the natural conclusion of those forces which the Buddha himself first set at work, or whose working he first directed and controlled. He inaugurated the movement toward a rapprochement with the Hindus; and the inevitable consummation of this movement was that very absorption which has heretofore appeared to us so illogical as involving such a complete *volte face*. As I conceive the situation, there was no *volte face* in the least, but only a steady progression in one direction.

One modification only is needed here, the elimination of Zarathushtra's name from its prominent place, to which Dr. Spooner now agrees. There are only two small points among his manifold evidences which in any way suggest the Prophet. On one of them, the in other ways improbable connexion of Garuda and Garonmana, I have already spoken. The other is the appearance in Buddhism of the great triad Thought, Word, and Deed. While Zarathushtra certainly makes much use of this, it might be fairly argued that in the absence of other clear indications of his influence we cannot prove him responsible for the invention of so

obvious a classification. We use it ourselves very largely, but we certainly never borrowed it from Zarathushtra! The scientific historian of ideas must learn to be more ready than he sometimes is to believe in coincidence. "Great wits jump"—"Great minds coincide," as we should put it to-day. At the same time I think this may well be one of the very few survivals from Zarathushtra's own teaching which came into the common stock of Persian religion before the Sassanian era. It was a very clear-cut and simple idea, however profound and wide-reaching in its ethical implications, and it lent itself easily to the Magian instinct for symmetrical classification.

One other point of contact is mentioned by Dr. Spooner which I should like to develop a little. He tells us of "sculptures depicting the *fravashi* of Gautama in the Tushita Heaven, prior to descending into Māyā's womb;" and he recognises "the source from which the doctrine of the Boddhisattvas came." Now, as I have tried to show elsewhere, the doctrine of the Fravashis is composite, partly arising from pure ancestor-worship, which is Aryan, and partly from the idea of "doubles," heavenly counterparts, which were pre-existent. This second conception I claimed for the Magi, and this new evidence confirms me. Moreover I should see here a link which explains Gautama's acceptance of the comparatively recent Hindu doctrine of Reincarnation. It was a very different idea from that of the Magian pre-existent Fravashi, but there was just enough in common to enable a Magian to take the step. One brought up on the pure milk of Zarathushtra's teaching would never have thought of such a doctrine. I would add that one who had inherited Zarathushtra's pure and lofty doctrine of God would never have despaired of Theism as Gautama did. The mechanical dualism which seems to have been native to the Magi had as little attraction for such a mind as Hindu polytheism itself.

It only remains for me to refer to the one place where according to some first-rate Avestan scholars the name of Gautama appears in the Yashts (XIII. 16). We read there that the Fravashis cause the birth of a master of assemblies, skilled in sacred lore, who "comes away from

debate" a victor over Gaotema. In the light of the new proposals we should now suppose that Magi who accepted their great clansman's doctrine returned to the country where the Magi had the firmest hold, and tried to preach his doctrine there under the aegis of his name. This of course is problematical: there are plenty of leading Iranists who will not recognise Gautama here at all.

We have once more been compelled to reject reluctantly evidence which seemed to bring Zarathushtra out into the full stream of history centuries before the Sassanian age. It was tempting to find a connexion between the two great prophets whom the Indo-Iranian stock has given the world. But we who admire them both will feel that the younger thinker rejects just what is most permanently valuable in the teaching of the elder, and accepts only secondary elements in doctrine even traditionally associated with his name. It is better for both that they part. But what remains established is a new and unexpected doubling of the period during which the Parsis have rendered service to India, and their contribution to the influence which moulded the founder of what is still one of the greatest religions of the world.

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82 Iran's contribution to India
83 Asoka's edicts, a clear echo of Darius at Behistun

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